How is literature used in English textbooks?

A study of four textbooks for VG1 English

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Abstract

In the present masters study I have examined four different VG1 English textbooks for the Knowledge Promotion LK06 syllabus. The goal for this study was to find out how these four textbooks used literature and literary texts, and I have examined the presentation of these texts made by the textbooks and in what contexts they are used, as well as the tasks connected to these texts and what differences there are from textbook to textbook. My main research statement is therefore: "How are literary texts and the aspect of literature treated in four textbooks in VG1 English?".

The theoretical approach I apply to this study is primarily a contrast between reader response theory and New Criticism, two literary theories which both have significant theories about why and how literature should be worked with in the classroom, and I will also apply selected theories on the use of different types of tasks in concordance to literature.

The methodology in this thesis lies primarily in content analysis, in which I classify the different elements on which each presentation of a literary text and its tasks are based on. When comparing the different textbooks these data are categorized to reflect the different theoretical approaches, and they are then analyzed by which of these approaches seem to be used in these textbooks and how they are used together. The literary texts and their tasks make up the data in this thesis, and are supplied with other editorial elements such as textbook design, layout, chapters, text distribution etc.

The results in this thesis showed large similarities in these four textbooks, but also many notable differences in how each textbook presented the literary texts and how they were used in context with the rest of the chapter or the textbook, and also in the number of texts and tasks and the types of tasks. Both the theoretical approaches, reader response theory and New Criticism, were represented in this study, but some textbooks were influenced more by one theory than others. In the discussion of these results I will go into what implications these differences might have and what might be the end result of working within these different theories. The analysis shows that literature is used in many different ways to develop many different qualities and competences in the students, both academically and personally.

Sammendrag

I denne oppgaven har jeg sett på fire ulike lærebøker i fellesfaget engelsk for VG1, studieforberedende retning, for Kunnskapsløftet K06. Målet for denne studien var å finne ut hvordan disse fire ulike lærebøkene brukte litteratur og litterære tekster, og jeg har sett på lærebokens presentasjon av disse og i hvilke sammenhenger de opptrer, samt hvilke oppgaver elevene er ment å gjøre til de ulike tekstene og hvilke forskjeller det er mellom de fire lærebøkene. Hovedproblemstillingen er derfor: "How are literary texts and the aspect of literature treated in four textbooks in VG1 English?".

Den teoretiske tilknytningen ligger primært i en kontrastering mellom leserens respons-kritikk (reader response theory) og ny-kritikk (New Criticism), to litteraturteoretiske retninger som begge har særskilte teorier om hvorfor og hvordan en bør jobbe med litteratur i klasserommet, og jeg vil også supplere med utvalgte teorier om bruken av ulike typer oppgaver i forbindelse med litterære tekster.

Den metodiske tilnærmingen i denne oppgaven ligger primært i innholdsanalyse (content analysis) der jeg klassifiserer de ulike elementene som ligger til grunne for hvordan hver enkelt litterær tekst blir presentert og arbeidet med. For å sammenligne de ulike bøkene blir disse dataene derfor summert opp i kategorier for å gjenspeile de teoretiske tilnærmingene, for så å analysere hvilke teoretiske tilnærminger som finnes i disse lærebøkene og hvordan de går sammen. Litterære tekster i lærebøkene samt oppgaver til disse tekstene utgjør data i denne oppgaven, og suppleres med andre redaksjonelle elementer som f.eks. hvordan lærebøkene er bygget opp, layout, kapittelinndeling etc.

Resultatene viste store likheter mellom de ulike lærebøkene, men også vesentlige forskjeller i hvordan hver enkelt bok presenterte litterære tekster og hvordan de ble brukt i sammenheng med resten av kapittelet eller læreboken, det samme kan sies å gjelde for antall tekster og oppgaver, samt typer av oppgaver. De ulike teoretiske tilnærmingene, reader response theory og New Criticism var begge representert, og enkelte bøker var mer dominert av en særskilt teori enn de andre. I diskusjonen av disse resultatene går jeg nøyere inn på hvilke implikasjoner disse forskjellene kan ha og hva som kan bli utfallet av dem. Resultatene viser at litteratur brukes på mange ulike måter for å styrke ulike egenskaper og kompetanser hos elevene, både akademisk og personlig.

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1 Introduction

I would like to start the introduction to this thesis with a quote by Judith Langer, as cited by Lars-Göran Malmgren (1997, p.218-219):

> *Literature makes us better thinkers. It moves us to see the multisideness of situations and therefore expands the breadth of our visions, moving us towards dreams and solutions we might not otherwise have imagined. It affects how we go about learning in academic situations, how we solve problems at work and at home. And it moves us to consider our interconnectedness with others and the intrinsic pluralism of meaning; it helps us to become human.*

I think that most of us have, at one point or another in our lives, been truly moved by something we have read. We may have been moved to tears, either of joy, of sadness or of anger, because of a poem or novel, or perhaps only a few well-placed sentences. How is it that this can happen? After all, a text is merely a text, symbols on paper, and if we have not written it ourselves, how can we possibly identify with it or live through it in such a way that it shakes us to our core? Many of us can probably remember this particular work, and it may be highly unlikely that we read it in a textbook at school. These textbooks are supposed to be filled with texts with a factual content. We can of course learn something from reading them, such as history, culture, etc., and through reading these textbooks we can also develop our reading skills. Are literary texts not really important in this regard, or are they? If so, what can we learn from literature?

In this thesis I will examine how literature is treated in the textbooks that are used today, focusing on VG1 English, which is the first year of upper secondary school, and the last year in which Norwegian students have English as a compulsory subject. My goal is to find out what kinds of literary texts there are, how these texts are treated and what tasks are connected to these texts. I have chosen four different textbooks as my material for this study and will also emphasize what differences there are between these textbooks with regard to textbook design, the treatment of literary texts and the tasks which accompany these texts. In the present chapter I will start by presenting the current curriculum and how literature is a part of the aims for the subject of English at this level, before I present my research statement and elaborate on this. Finally I will give an outline of this thesis as well as limitations and definitions.

1.1 Literature through the curricula

I will start this section by taking a look at Reform 94 (R94), which was the previous curriculum for this subject at this level. As R94 was a curriculum only for the upper secondary school, it is therefore easily comparable to the current curriculum, which is for all the grades. In R94's general information section, this is stated in "Why learn English":

> *Work with literary and other cultural texts is intended to give pupils a deeper level of communicative competence, as well as developing the joy of reading good literature and the ability to interpret and experience. It is also intended to increase the pupils' creativity, while helping them to develop greater insight into themselves and understanding of other people and circumstances.*

This curriculum also presents some interesting common objectives for the subject. I have picked out a few of them here:

> ***Pupils shall be able to***
>
> - *use their cultural knowledge in interpreting texts*
> - *discuss and comment on literary and non-fiction texts*
> - *defend their own opinions and explain their own choices*
> - *discuss ethical issues*
> - *respect the views of others regardless of background, age, sex or religion*

As can be seen from these objectives, there is a clear focus on literature in this curriculum, on what literature can evoke and how it can be discussed. Not only is it to develop the students' reading skills, but also their communicative skills, their ethical and interpretative thinking, as well as a deeper respect and understanding of other people. One can only wonder how these objectives were operationalized in textbooks and in classrooms, and whether these objectives

changed when a new reform was created, namely the Knowledge Promotion (LK06). This reform will be presented in the following section.

LK06 and English curricula

The current Knowledge Promotion, curriculum for the common core subject English, was introduced in autumn 2006. The reform covers primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education and training. VG1, or 11th grade, is the last year with English as a compulsory subject in LK06, after that the students in the programme for general studies are dependent on their school having a "Programme for Specialization" providing elective subjects in English. These are called *International English* for VG2 (12th grade), and *Social Studies English* or *English literature and culture* for VG3 (13th grade, final year). It is up to each individual school which of these courses they will offer the students. I will not go further into these subjects, but will return to the subject curriculum for the common core subject English. In the following, all quotes are taken directly from LK06.

The objectives of the subject explain why English is so important, both the language and the different cultures of which the language belongs. As an international language, it is vital that we can understand it and be understood when we speak it, in order to be able to take part in the growing global society. Through literature, we can be exposed to these cultures and perhaps also varieties of English in these cultures. I want to highlight some of the objectives that are particularly important with regard to the use of literature:

> *In addition to learning the English language, this subject will also contribute insight into the way we live and how others live, and their views on life, values and cultures. Learning about the English-speaking world will provide a good basis for understanding the world around us and how English developed into a world language. Literature in English, from nursery rhymes to Shakespeare' sonnets, may instil a lifelong joy of reading and provide a deeper understanding of oneself and others. English texts, films, music and other art forms may also inspire the pupil's own artistic expression and creativity in many genres and media.*
>
> *Thus English as a school subject is both a tool and a way of gaining knowledge and personal insight. It will enable the pupils to communicate with others on personal, social, literary and interdisciplinary topics. It will give insight into how individuals*

> *think and live in the English-speaking world. Communicative skills and cultural insight can promote greater interaction, understanding and respect between people with different cultural backgrounds. In this way linguistic and cultural competence contributes to the all-round personal development and fosters democratic commitment and a better understanding of responsible citizenship.*

As we can see here, not only is the use of literature to develop reading skills, but also insight, communication skills and understanding, as was also the objective in the previous curriculum. Through literature, students are to be familiarized with the English-speaking world, and to develop their linguistic and cultural competence, skills that are also vital in communicating in a global society, both in writing and in speaking. The curriculum is further divided into main subject areas, which have their own competence aims for each school year. These areas are *Language learning*, *Communication* and *Culture, society and literature*, an explanation of the last area follows here:

> *The main area culture, society and literature focuses on cultural understanding in a broad sense. It is based on the English-speaking world and covers key topics connected to social issues, literature and other cultural expressions. This main area also focuses on developing knowledge about English as a world language with many areas of use. Working with various types of texts and other cultural expressions is important for developing linguistic skills and understanding how others live, and their cultures and views on life. Reading literature may also help to instil the joy of reading in pupils and provide the basis for personal growth, maturity and creativity.*

English as a subject is not just about acquiring a language and being able to speak, write and understand it, it is also about personal growth and defining yourself. Through literature, the students are to develop linguistic skills, a deeper understanding of other cultures and "views on life", and hopefully also experience the joy of reading.

The final section of the English common core subject presents the different competence aims for each school year. The competence aims are, as stated in a previous section, categorized by what main subject area they belong to. In regard to literature,

Communication and *Culture, society and literature* are the two areas where the use of literature is featured in the competence aims. In the following I will present some of these competence aims that are of particular interest.

> ***Communication***
>
> *The aims are that the pupil shall be able to*
>
> • *read texts from different genres and with different objectives*
>
> ***Culture, society and literature***
>
> *The aims are that the pupil shall be able to*
>
> • *discuss social and cultural conditions and values from a number of English-speaking countries*
>
> • *discuss and elaborate on English texts from a selection of different genres, poems, short stories, novels, films and theatre plays from different epochs and parts of the world*
>
> • *discuss literature by and about indigenous peoples in the English-speaking world*

As can be seen from these competence aims, none of them specify that the students are to learn about other people's experiences in different parts of the world through reading literature, nor do they say anything about insight and reflection, as the objectives for the subject emphasizes. But, how can one really measure whether students have acquired these kinds of skills? The competence aims do, however, want the students to be able to discuss, an activity in which they can use their own experiences, attitudes and values in order to make sense of the texts they read, and also be exposed to their classmates' attitudes and values, which may be similar or different to one's own. Also, through the use of tasks connected to the relevant texts in the textbooks, the objectives can be operationalized by focusing on particular parts of these objectives, for example cultural or linguistic competence.

I have now presented the framework for the purpose of this thesis. In chapter 6 I will return to these competence aims through how the results from the analysis reflect both these aims and the objectives mentioned here. In the following I continue on to presenting my research statement, as well as some definitions, and an outline of the thesis.

1.2 My research statement

Prior to 2009/2010, all upper secondary school students had to buy their own textbooks. Today they are given these textbooks by the school. Both before and after this change, the school was in charge of what textbook they wanted the teachers and the students to use. The selection of textbooks they could choose from has always been diverse, and it was up to the textbook writers to create textbooks that would be appealing to students and teachers, while at the same time maintaining the content of the relevant curriculum. The textbooks were to be comprehensive enough to be able to aid the student in developing different skills, and comprise texts of different difficulty and topics especially selected for the age group in question. However, how each different textbook chooses to interpret the competence aims and objectives, as stated in the curriculum, will obviously be different from publishing house to publishing house. The resulting textbooks will therefore, most likely, be different in regard to these aspects. However, as I have experienced both as a student and as a teacher, there are many similarities between these textbooks as well, especially when it comes to the literary texts that are featured, often appearing in more than one textbook. What is interesting about this phenomenon is whether the text is treated any differently in the different textbooks, and what these differences are.

What I wanted to do in this thesis was to examine the textbooks that are used today, at how literature is used in these textbooks and why, with particular emphasis on the tasks that precede or follow the particular texts. As I expect to find some similarities between the textbooks, I also want to find out what differences there are between them. I will also focus on how the different textbooks do things differently, and what the results of this is. I have therefore decided on the following research statement, with some areas of focus. My research statement is:

How are literary texts and the aspect of literature treated in four textbooks in VG1 English?

Within this research statement there are a few aspects I want to focus on:

How are literary texts presented in the textbooks? I plan to look at the design of the textbooks and editorial choices made in them, and see how they differ in their presentation of literary texts and what the impressions of these differences are.

What kinds of tasks are connected to the literary texts and what do these tasks induce? I will have a look at all the different tasks connected to these literary texts, both preceding and following the text. I will also categorize the different tasks based on their content and how they reflect the theories I want to use. The different ways the textbooks use certain types of tasks for their literary texts will hopefully also say something about why literary texts are added and what the students are supposed to be left with after reading them.

What differences are there in the treatment of literary texts in the four textbooks? I will here point to differences which reflect theoretical framework of the different tasks, as well as differences in textbook design.

1.3 An outline of the thesis

In this introduction I have presented the current curriculum for the subject of English in VG1, and how this curriculum includes literature as a part of English teaching and why. I have also presented my research statement, *How are literary texts and the aspect of literature treated in four textbooks in VG1 English,* and defined what I will focus upon trying to answer this question.

Chapter 2 will present the theoretical framework for this thesis, in which I will present why and how literature is, and should be worked with in school. This is based on different theoretical perspectives, some theories relevant to the role of the reader in literature, and also some approaches to literature which discusses how literature is used in textbooks, what tasks are connected to them and how these are formed, and what the end result of these different approaches could be. Next, the methodical approaches I will use in the analysis will be explained in chapter 3, as well as my reasoning for analytical and methodical choices I have made in my study. In this chapter one can also find the categories I will use to classify my material and a detailed description of these will also be given.

In chapter 4, I will provide an account of the four different textbooks that make up my material. I give each of them an individual presentation and account for their general layout, their texts and their tasks. I have also looked at them as a whole, pointing at significant differences and similarities between them.

Next, in chapter 5, I will present the results from the analysis of the four textbooks, in which I have classified them according to the categories from chapter 3, and will comment briefly on

these findings. In chapter 6 I will then discuss the results in light of the theoretical framework as presented in chapter 2, in an attempt to answer my research statement.

My thesis will be concluded in chapter 7, in which I will sum up the main content from this thesis, and suggest possible follow-ups for this study.

1.4 Definitions

In this thesis there are a few terms that I feel that I should explain so there are not any misunderstandings.

- *Task* – a task is a questions posed before or after the reading of a text. They often come in groups, for example Task 1a, 1b, 1c or are sorted into different types of tasks in the textbooks, such as "Speaking" tasks, "Writing" tasks, etc. A task will often be formed as a question, for example: "Do you think Person X did the right thing? Why or why not?", or present a practical task they must do, for example: "Write a short summary of the story".
- *Question* – the specific question posed in a task
- *Task type* – A categorizing of tasks done by the textbooks, and which I will refer to as task types, for example "Speaking" tasks, "Writing" tasks etc.
- *Task category* – A categorizing of tasks done by me, by using my methodical approaches in order to sort tasks into categories which reflect my theoretical material, for example "Reading comprehension and details" or "Reflecting on and analyzing the content of the text".
- *EFL* – English as a Foreign Language.

2 My theoretical framework

In this chapter I present the theoretical framework I use to analyze my results in this thesis. I will first give an account of why I, and many others, find that literature is an important part of English teaching. Afterwards I will touch upon some results from surveys done with regard to reading in schools, and what kinds of texts that should be used in schools and why. I will then present reader response theory which is relevant to discuss the use of tasks which asks the students to actively engage with the text. Reader response theory is based on a text being dependent of a reader for it to actually be a text. However, as there are many different types of readers with different backgrounds, the text will be a different text for each of these readers. The focus is on the experience the students have while interacting with the text, rather than trying to find the objective "meaning" of a text. I will also present New Criticism as an opposition to reader response, a theory whose approach to literature is based on objective analysis of the text, in which the reader's personal background, and in some cases the author's background, is irrelevant. Afterwards I will present the available and relevant theories around the use of tasks and what types of tasks there are.

2.1 Why literature?

I want to give an example from Lars-Göran Malmgren's book, *Åtta läsare på mellanstadiet (*1997), in which he has interviewed students in the lower secondary school and asked them what they think about different ways of teaching literature. In one of the chapters about thematic literature teaching, a young girl named Anna is presented. The teaching is this case is based on a children's novel, *The Sign of the Beaver* by Elizabeth George Speare, and the class talks about how the two protagonists, the young Native American boy named Attean and a settler boy called Matt, communicate. Malmgren adds that the book gives the students an opportunity to develop a cultural understanding as well, as there are many conflicting elements in the two boys' different backgrounds. Anna, however, does not think that this factual information is focused upon at all, as her feedback on the teaching is rendered (p.88, my translation):

> *What kind of job would we get by knowing Attean's and Matt's characteristics? Nothing, right? Why do we do this then? […] How are we supposed to manage in 7th grade, 8th grade, 9th grade, if they ask us what we have learned we will answer 'Well,*

the characteristics of Attean and Matt, but they are just fictional characters in a book called 'The Sign of the Beaver'. What do you think they will think about us? What awful students, probably slept through classes. What dense kids. Does not know shit about geography, history. Well, we did learn a bit about North America. Lest we forget that, right? But as I said, we will not be anything else but crappy jobs.

In Anna's case, it may look like she has been very disappointed with the fact that 'real' information, hard facts like geography and history, have not been focused on through the teaching of this book. Her view reflects a view of language learning that Paran (2008) calls an isolationist position, in which language learning, such as English in EFL classes, should be concerned only with acquiring competence in the language. He cites Shanahan (1997) who discovers a similar trend in EFL in the US, where "teaching a foreign language is justified mainly through its contribution to the learner's careers" (p.469). However, what Anna does not seem to realize that there is much to learn from this story, through the background of these two characters, and she simply dismisses the whole book as fiction which does not have any foundation in reality. Students like Anna will most likely dismiss literature as unnecessary, as they cannot always learn something from it, something which can be reproduced in evaluation situations, and they are simply not motivated to engage with literature. But, there are many aspects of reading literature that are not necessarily visible in the text itself. Literature gives a reader, through the form of written words, a glimpse of someone else's life, which may differ from one's own with regard to historical periods, culture, which values and attitudes are presented, and a country's or people's heritage. Through reading about someone else, we define ourselves and who we are, whether we can or cannot identify with the story. As Shanahan adds, "our fundamental goals as language professionals is to expand and enrich the lives of our students and the society in which they live" (p.469). In the following I will present some theoretical aspects and give reasons to why literature can be useful in English teaching. I will also touch on what kinds of texts should ideally be used in school, based on appropriateness and authenticity.

2.2 Literature: why and how? Some theoretical perspectives

Why is literature a part of the subject of English, not only in Norwegian schools, but indeed all over the world? Brumfit and Carter (2000) show that the areas of use for literature are numerous, but at the same time limited, as we cannot separate literature from the history of literature, literary texts from the culture they portray, or examples of the English language (p.25). Brumfit continues by adding that "a true literature syllabus will not be simply the use of literary texts for advanced language purposes, but an attempt to develop or extend literary competence" (p.185). Paran (2008) adds that through the years, there has been a move towards integrating language and literature in EFL (p.466), which means that by using literature, the students can develop and strengthen other skills besides reading skills, without using a literary text specifically for this purpose, but rather integrating all the skills in one activity.

The following three reasons for why reading can be beneficial in a learning environment are based on Collie and Slater (1990). These reasons have emerged from the types of literary texts and tasks featured in high school English textbooks, and they may all be equally important when reading and working with literary texts.

Personal involvement: Reading for understanding and strengthening one's identity

Duff (1992) states that through literature, we can provide experiences, explorations to enable students to think and feel life and to develop an understanding of what it means to be a human being: "This opportunity to engage in making meaning of literary experiences helps the students to understand themselves. Through self-understanding, the students will be able to understand others" (p.207). Literature is therefore an important part of developing an identity, not just to learn and observe the language in question being used, and a part of developing an understanding of different cultures and different values, often by comparing them to one's own and thereby strengthening one's own values and beliefs. Northrop Frye said, as cited by McKay (2000, p.193):

> *So you ask what is the use of studying the world of imagination where anything is possible and anything can be assumed, where there are no rights or wrongs and all arguments are equally good. One of the most obvious uses, I think, is its encouragement of tolerance.*

By learning about others, being presented with main protagonists and characters who have to make difficult choices and who represent values the students may or may not agree with, they will also have to deal with their own emotions, values and life situation; "[…] the new experience challenges the reader's assumptions and understandings, he may be stimulated to clarify his own values, his own prior sense of the world and its possibilities" (Rosenblatt 1994, p.145). Students may also attempt to place themselves in these characters' places while reading, using the character's background in order to reason with them, instead of just deciding whether a character's actions are right or wrong based on one's own background. Tompkins (1980) cites Gibson who claims that students who are conscious of the various identities they assume as readers will be better able to make value judgment about literature, "[…] by allowing the student to accept or reject the role a novelist offers him […] [he is] more aware of his own value system and better able to deal with problems of self-definition" (p.11).

Language enrichment

Brumfit and Carter (2000) consider using literature for another reason than just to develop reading skills, namely to assist the development of language competence in English, albeit while being a bit critical towards that usage; "Although the texts being used are literary […] the prime intention is to teach language, not literature, and the texts may be used as contexts for exemplification and discussion of linguistic items which have no bearing on the value of the work as literature" (p.25). Literature can help students understand linguistics, grammar and develop their vocabulary, but as they argue, this is not the proper use of literature. McKay (2000) cites Povey who argues that literature will in fact increase all language skills because "literature will extend linguistic knowledge by giving evidence of extensive and subtle vocabulary usage, and complex and exact syntax" (p.191). However, she does not agree with him, as one of our main goals as EFL teachers is to teach the grammar of the language, literature, due to its structural complexity and its unique use of language, does little to

contribute to that goal. Paran (2008) refers to Belcher and Hirvela (2000) who suggest that "reading and writing only information-based texts may in fact prevent students from developing the 'array of rhetorical and linguistic resources' […] that they need for their writing" (p.468).

Cultural enrichment

Corcoran (1992) argues that there can also be an instrumental view of language, which through literature "canonizes a range of texts which eventually function to preserve forms of social and cultural transmission" (p.50). Literature can thereby teach us about culture and about values throughout world history. Brumfit and Carter (2000) also present a second reason which agrees with Duff's opinion, that the reason for including literary texts is in order to teach 'culture'. It is claimed that studying literature enables us to understand the foreign culture more clearly (p.25). They continue by explaining how literature and factual texts can work side by side in any syllabus (p.28):

> *A good language syllabus, then, may include literary texts, but will not necessarily do so. A syllabus intended to provide cultural information will probably include literary texts, but should include a great deal of other information and sources of stimulus, including historical and journalistic material, samples of other art forms, and accounts of scientific and technical and sociological factors.*

As we can see from this, learning the language does not require literary texts, whereas in learning about culture, literary texts would be a more natural part of the syllabus. However, Edmondson, as cited by Paran (2008), believes that literature and language teaching are not compatible as such, and that in literature teaching, the teacher's interpretation is all that counts. He further argues that "other curriculum subjects probably provide a better insight into culture than literature does; that literary elements and references in the language are not more important than other cultural references […]" (p. 468). Even though the students may learn culture in other and more effective ways, only literature can be personal and gives the students an insight in how cultural and historical happenings may have felt for those who experienced it, which may work to promote better understanding. In comparison, Brumfit (2000) says that "the fundamental ability of a good reader of literature is the ability to generalize from the given text either to other aspects of the literary tradition or to personal or

social significances outside literature" (p.188), which may be applicable to both culture and personal development.

These three reasons I have just explained all have good arguments for why literature should be an important part of an English subject, as it can develop many other skills and competences other than reading and reading comprehension. Reading and working with literature will also, by allowing students to experience worlds outside their own, and allowing them to define themselves in contrast to others and their culture to other cultures, lead to personal growth and an insight in who they themselves are. In the next section I will have a look at some of the work that has been done in getting students to read more, and why they should do so.

2.2.1 How do the students actually read?

Were it not for literature being used in school, many students would probably not be exposed to literature at all. Some students, especially boys, are often not interested in reading, and may not find it very appealing. Reasons for this are many; boys, and also girls, may be more interested in web-based activities such as computer games, or may have other hobbies instead of reading. The results from the PISA report from 2009, "På rett spor. Norske elevers kompetanse i naturfag, lesing og matematikk", a report about students' competence in science, reading and mathematics, show that in 2000, 65% of the total number of students who took part in the PISA survey from that year answered that they read for their own enjoyment, 54% of the boys and 75% of the girls. In 2003, there was a small increase of the overall percentage, as well as in 2006, however, only the boys' percentage increased whereas the girls' decreased. These results are clearly visible in the results from the survey, as the girls score significantly higher than boys in the reading tests. In 2009, however, 51% of the boys answered that they read for their own enjoyment. Editor of the report, Astrid Roe, thinks these results may be caused by an increase in the use of the Internet, as students will often read quite a lot online as well, but will not necessarily consider this to be reading. In order to achieve the same positive growth from 2000-2006, students' motivation for reading needs to be strengthened. However, as Roe points out in a lecture held in Haugesund 28.09.2010, teachers cannot necessarily influence their students to read, but they can help them to become better readers and thereby develop good reading habits. Roe also points out that a student's reading comprehension depends to a large degree on how much they read in their spare time,

and what attitudes they have to reading. This attitude is very much affected by the attitude of the student's parents and often also their socioeconomic situation. There can also be personal reasons why students do not read in their spare time, for example a struggle with dyslexia or a lack of reading skills. From 2003 to 2007, a reading strategy campaign called "Gi rom for lesing" was launched by the Ministry of Education and Research, which focused on getting students to read more, especially boys. During the same time, many book series were launched that would appeal to boys, especially in the fantasy genre, such as *Harry Potter*, *Lord of the Rings* and *Narnia*. Not only are these types of books more action-filled, many of them also have young male protagonists, which could be a selling point for young boys and may strengthen their motivation to read – and these types of books may have helped achieve that positive growth from 2000-20006. While this thesis was being written, the Ministry of Education and Research has presented a proposition named "Meld.st. 22: Motivasjon – Mestring – Muligheter", in which they want to continue and strengthen "Lesesatsing 2010 – 2014", with particular emphasis on boys in lower secondary school. This is a continuation of "Gi rom for lesing" from 2003.

Hopefully, with the right motivation and the right literature, all students can grow fonder of reading, and become better readers overall because of it. As literature are authentic examples of the English language being used, students can learn more than just reading, but also develop their writing and speaking skills as they are exposed to language in this way. Nevertheless, some texts are definitely more appropriate than others, in order to get the students interested in literature while at the same time achieving the competence aims for the subject of English. This aspect will be discussed in the following section.

2.2.2 What kinds of texts are appropriate to use?

The kind of literature used in English textbooks at this level is quite diverse, and the literature should ideally both be interesting to the students and also representative of different genres, literary periods and literary themes. As well as being challenging enough for the students to learn new vocabulary and observe new uses of language and grammatical features, it should not be too difficult, as this may lead to a loss of motivation to read at all. The reader's interest is taken into account by selected material that is similar to what the students encounter in real life, "in order to maintain students' motivation and involvement" (Rivas 1999, p.14). What seems to be vital is that the students in one way or another are intrigued by the text, and if an

unfamiliar situation is depicted in the text in question, this may be a gateway into a story which may prove to be more recognizable than first imagined. Christenbury elaborates (1992, p.34):

> *[…] The literature itself must have some connection to the students' lives […] students must be involved, must be engaged to the point where the discussion leads them "to raise personal meaningful questions… [and] to seek in the text the basis for valid answers"*

Many of the texts that are chosen to be in these textbooks are therefore often chosen because they deal with topics and themes that occupy young adults, and this makes it easier to get the students actively engage with the text. One way of doing this is the use of tasks, which I will return to below. According to McKay (2000), it is important to select themes with which the students can identify, as many EFL students may struggle with a language and culture with which they are unfamiliar, "literature which deals with either of these themes [personal growth and development] should be highly relevant to them" (p.194). If the texts do not appeal to the students, neither by the theme, the values represented nor a familiar cultural aspect, the students will inevitably lose motivation and interest.

Despite the lack of a "canon", textbooks have a certain number of what I would call "classic" texts. These texts are often typical of earlier literary periods and are written by authors the students may have heard of but may not be familiar with, such as Shakespeare, Austen, Poe, Dickens, Brontë, Joyce etc. Such texts, which are often used to present and be an example of the literary period they belong to, may cause problems in a classroom. The language in these texts, if the texts are presented with their original language that is, may prove to be challenging, even if modern translations are provided. McKay explains that a common method used to solve such problems is to simplify the text. However, "since proficient readers rely heavily on localized information and cohesive devices, deleting these elements [cohesion and readability] will contribute little to the development of reading skills" (p.193), McKay continues, presenting a predicament: Should one use modern translations of the classics so the students will not struggle with the language, or should the original texts be used in order to preserve that authenticity? The answer to that depends on what the purpose of the text is; whether it is there to show the students what literature or even the English language looked like in that literary period, to teach them something about the theme of the text, or to do something completely different. Karolides (1992) brings up the transactional

theory of literature, which I will return to in chapter 3, and argues that the language of a text, the situation, characters, or the expressed issues can dissuade a reader from comprehension of the text and thus inhibit involvement with it, "in effect, if the reader has insufficient linguistic or experiential background to allow participation, the reader cannot relate to the text, and the reading act will be short-circuited" (p.23). Therefore, there needs to be something about the text that will interest the students in some way in order for the reading and understanding of a text to be successful, and if this is not provided in the text itself, devices should be used in order to evoke such an engagement.

Not only classic texts are used in textbooks these days; extracts from modern novels and modern authors are presented, some of which the students may be familiar with already. Some authors may write mainly for an adult audience, while others write specifically for this age group. Some may not even be Western writers, as "[…] young adult literature has provided a market much more accessible to minority writers than has adult, "mainstream" literature, and as such is more diverse" (Furniss 1992, p.199). This type of literature often has African-American or Native American protagonists, and as well as presenting different cultures and values belonging to the author or protagonist in question, an awareness of cultural diversity, even within the class itself, may be evoked from working with this literature. These differences may therefore be discussed in the class as a way of raising awareness and expanding the students' knowledge and appreciation of different cultures. Braj Kachru (2000) brings us to the fact that the literature in the subject of English no longer is English literature, but literature in English, meaning that the language rather than the nationality of the author is of importance, and the criteria for whether the text will be used. He says, "there are also some who have doubted the appropriateness of a non-native language [English] for recreating typically Indian (or Asian) social, cultural, or emotional contexts; the doubts being about the authenticity of a non-native medium of such creativity" (p.141). However, by writing in English, these authors are able to reach a greater audience than by writing in their native language, and will claim that their language is not who they are, it does not define them. Another aspect of choosing appropriate texts is whether the texts are authentic texts or not, meaning if they have been used as they were written originally, or if they have been simplified or in other ways fabricated in order to serve a certain purpose in the textbooks. These aspects will be elaborated on in the section below.

2.2.3 Valuable authentic material: The question of authenticity in texts

Rivas (1999) discusses the question of authentic texts in her article, and writes that "several factors now influence the selection of reading texts for the EFL classroom", in Rivas' case the mother tongue of the students is Spanish. "Apart from readability, other criteria taken into account include authenticity and reader interest. The notion of 'authenticity' (…) has been a matter of debate among teachers and researchers for decades. An authentic text has traditionally been defined as one written for native speakers" (p.13). By using this definition, one may of course question whether the most important thing is that the students can understand the content due to familiarity with cultural and linguistic differences between varieties of English and varieties of texts. McKay (2000) argues; "An interaction with a literary text depends on a reader's familiarity with the cultural assumptions in it […] Literature is a facet of a culture. Its significance can be best understood in terms of its culture, and its purpose is meaningful only when the assumptions it is based on are understood and accepted" (p.198). Therefore, in some cases "authentic texts" are simplified or "doctored" as Rivas calls it, making them easier to read, and she adds that those who support the use of authentic texts suggest the use of pre- and post-reading exercises as a way of increasing comprehensibility, in case the texts are a bit difficult. By doing so, the texts need not be simplified or fabricated.

Long (2000) argues that "literature is by definition authentic text, and both verbal response and activity response are genuine language activities, not ones contrived around a fabricated text" (p.58). This means that in a reader-response classroom, the text's features are not important as long as they are responded to. However, a fabricated text may not evoke genuine responses from the students and are better used as examples of text structure, grammar etc., or as fact-based texts "concealed" as literary texts. Also, by familiarizing the students with the cultural and historical content of a text, the story becomes a history. This may make a literary text which is not authentic in that it is fiction, more authentic and more alike any fact-based text. Collie and Slater (1990) agree to this: "Literature is 'authentic' material. By that we simply mean that most works of literature are not fashioned for the specific purpose of teaching a language" (p.3), and they continue by mentioning that many course materials add other authentic samples of the language being used, such as time tables, cartoons, newspaper articles, etc.

Literature will not necessarily give us more factual knowledge, but it may make us better people and better readers. It provides us with an understanding of how we as humans all differ from each other for different reasons, and why we do what we do because we have different backgrounds. We can also often find that even though we read texts written hundreds of years ago, we can still identify with characters and we can understand why they do what they do. We basically learn more about human and human nature, and through that, we become more aware of ourselves. In the next section I will present the theoretical framework I will apply to my material in my analysis and discussion, and I will start with reader response theory.

2.3 Reader response theory

The reader response movement is said to have started with the literary theorists I.A. Richards, who I will return to in the section about New Criticism, and Louise Rosenblatt, who I will present in the next section. Both reader response theory and New Criticism can be said to have similar origins, but whereas New Criticism focuses on the text, reader response theory focuses on the reader. Tompkins (1980) presents the reader response movement in opposition to the New Critical maxim issued by William Wimsatt and Monroe Beardsley in "The Affective Fallacy" from 1949. The fallacy is described as "a confusion between the poem and its results…. It begins by trying to derive the standard of criticism from the psychological effects of a poem and ends in impressionism and relativism" (p. 21), or in other words, the misconception of thinking that one can judge a text based on the emotional imprint it has on the reader. Tompkins further argues that in reader response theory, a text cannot be understood apart from its results, and its effects are essential to its meaning, as those effects do not exist outside of the mind of the reader.

The basic idea behind reader response theory is that the reader is no longer simply a private individual, but has "[…] a culturally and historically determined function, and the […] situation of readers becomes a key factor in the description of the structure and actual composition of the literary text […]", and unlike New Critical theories, the reader does not simply read the text and is given an impact that the text makes, "but is involved in a more active, or rather, a more interactive process" (Jefferson 1986, p.15). Therefore, a text is not an objective feature, but something that inevitably changes from reader to reader, based on his or her past experiences and how they perceive the text. A student who came to Norway as a

refugee, for example, will perhaps have memories and experiences with something described in a text, he might even identify with the protagonist immediately. A native Norwegian student may not have any similar experiences because of his or her background. These differences in background with reader will not only change the impact a text has on the reader, but will change the text itself; it is what defines the text.

2.3.1 Louise Rosenblatt and the transactional theory of reading

Louise Michelle Rosenblatt (1904-2005) is an American literary critic best known for her transactional theory of reading, a current within the reader response movement. She views literature "[...] not as an object, but as an experience shaped by the reader under guidance of the text [...] the poem is an event in time that comes about through a transaction between the reader and the text" (Clifford 1991, p.16). As her first work, *Literature as Exploration*, was published in 1938, during the peak of the New Criticism movement, her ideas were not acknowledged at first. However, her next work, *The Reader, The Text, The Poem: The Transactional Theory of the Literary Work*, which was more theoretical than the latter, would be appreciated more and would evoke a greater interest for her theories as opposed to New Criticism. Tompkins, as cited by Allen (1991), writes that Rosenblatt was "the first among the present generation of critics […] to describe empirically the way reader's reactions to a poem are responsible for any subsequent interpretation of it" (p.17). Allen elaborates on and adds that critics who acknowledged Rosenblatt generally attributed the lack of attention given her theoretical ideas to the influence of New Criticism in the years following the publication of *Literature as Exploration*.

The transactional theory of reading that Rosenblatt is known for is mainly based on a meeting between the reader and the text, in which the reader brings something to the reading, such as his or her background, previous experiences, feelings and emotions, which will eventually influence and affect the reading and the outcome of that reading. Malmgren (1997, p.214) comments on the transactional theory:

> *Reading literature is by Rosenblatt's reception theory seen as an integrated part of a human's life and experience […] The act of reading is seen as an act in which the text and the reader exchange experiences. The text does not exist as a separate object – it is given life through the reader.*

The text will also differ from reader to reader as "the images of life" that are created within the reader while reading will inevitably vary "[...] from reading to reading – and from culture to culture […] Your poem and my poem [...] is not the same even though we construct them with the same text in mind", or as Rosenblatt (1994) herself puts it, "the text is merely an object of paper and ink until some reader responds to the marks on the page as verbal symbols" (p.23). She is cited by Bleich (1980) who explains how the reader defines his experience of the reading by bringing to the work "personality traits, memories of past events, present needs and preoccupations, a particular mood of the moment and a particular physical condition" (p.144). These elements within the reader will create a unique experience while reading and will also culminate in a unique response. Bleich continues by defending Rosenblatt's theoretical approach and explaining the difference between reader response and New Criticism by insisting that the text cannot function unless it has a reader, and a text cannot be described or analyzed without reference to the reader. In this respect, T.S. Eliot, as cited by Rosenblatt (1994, p.15-16), agrees with her view of reading:

> *I suspect, in fact, that a good deal of the value of an interpretation is – that it should be my own interpretation. There are many things, perhaps, to know about this poem, or that, many facts about which scholars can instruct me which will help me to avoid definite misunderstandings; but a valid interpretation, I believe, must be at the same time an interpretation of my own feeling when I read it.*

2.3.2 Aesthetic vs. efferent reading

What makes Rosenblatt and her transactional theory relevant for this study is her theory on the transaction as aesthetic or efferent reading, meaning what the reader actually does with the text, as not all texts are read in the same way. Karolides (1992) presents the basic idea as follows: "The term "efferent" [...] designated the kind of reading in which attention is centered predominantly on what is to be extracted and retained after the reading event", exemplified by for example reading a label on a bottle of medicine in order to find information on how to use it; and "the predominantly aesthetic stance [...] in this kind of reading, the reader adopts an attitude of readiness to focus attention on what is being lived through during the reading event" (p.26). Rosenblatt (1994) contrasts between these two ways of reading by explaining the difference in the reader's focus of attention during the reading:

"In nonaesthetic reading, the reader's attention is focused primarily on what will remain as the residue after the reading – the information to be acquired […] the more she makes herself impersonal and transparent, the more efficiently she reads" (p.23-24). In a classroom, this difference will be evident in how the students are to work with literary texts and how they are presented in textbooks – the kind of "residue" the students are supposed to be left with after reading. "In aesthetic reading, in contrast", Rosenblatt continues, "the reader's primary concern is with what happens during the actual reading event […] he also pays attention to the associations, feelings, attitudes, and ideas that these words and their referents arouse in within him" (p.24-25). Many (1992) also adds that "an aesthetic reading evolves through attention to the more personal nature of experienced meaning and focuses on the selective process of creating a uniquely individual literary work through the transaction between a reader and a text" (p.106). The following table will illustrate the differences between these two ways on reading based on Rosenblatt's *The Reader, the Text, the Poem...* (1994, p.22 – 48):

Table 2.1 An overview of differences in aesthetic vs. efferent reading

Aesthetic reading	Efferent reading
The reader fixes his attention on the actual experience he is living through - the whole range of responses generated by the text to enter into the center of awareness, and out of these materials he selects and weaves what he sees as the literary work of art	The reader disengages his attention from personal elements in his initial response, concentrating on what symbols designate, what they are contributing to the end result the reader seeks (information, concepts, guides to action, definitions)
Should not be confused with train of free association	To later apply insights derived during reading to the practical historical figure requires a more efferent attitude
A certain distancing from "reality," because it is known that the experience is generated by the words and not by such images, situations, characters, actions observed directly without verbal mediation. The attention is consciously focused on what the words are stirring up	The text of a literary work of art can also be read efferently, and the production and reading of texts can be studied in their social contexts from a variety of angles by practitioners of disciplines such as history, sociology, economics, or anthropology
Sensing, feeling, imagining, thinking, synthesizing the states of mind, the reader who adopts the aesthetic attitude feels no compulsion other than to apprehend what goes on during this process, to concentrate on the complex structure of the experience that he is shaping and that becomes for him the poem, the story, the play symbolized by the text	The text can be analyzed as a document to be correlated with other evidence concerning the structure and development of the language. It can be studied as a document in the author's biography, for the light it sheds on his earlier experiences, his temperament, his knowledge, his reading. It can provide evidence concerning the society in which it was produced

As we can see here there are some definite opposing aspects, first and foremost on the topic of attention or stance when reading – whether the students are focusing on their own experience and their feelings while reading, or what factual information the text can give them. However, note that a reading is not necessarily either aesthetic or efferent, but "[…] readers may adopt a position that falls on a continuum somewhere between a more efferent or more aesthetic stance" (Many 1992, p.106). She explains how Rosenblatt compares the shifts in stance that may take place during any reading event to a fan, as the reader may move back and forth between a primarily efferent and a primarily aesthetic stance, eventually settling on one primary stance and therefore, many responses will often be a bit of both.

2.3.3 Reader response theory and aesthetic vs. efferent reading in practice

Why is this essential for teaching literature? Basically, the way of reading that textbook writers intend for the readers of the texts they have chosen will eventually determine what kinds of texts and tasks there are in the textbook. Neither way of reading can be defined as the "correct" one; however, we want to make sure that the students, if possible, can apply the right way of reading for a specific reading situation. "Despite the aesthetic stance suggested by the structure of a poem, the directions for a classroom assignment and the discussion questions, may induce an efferent reading" (Karolides 1992, p.27). If the reading is *not* intended to be efferent, the students' stance will need to change in order to be able to read the text in the way it is intended. This may be done by using pre-reading tasks which will induce the right stance, or post-reading tasks doing the same. However, pre-reading tasks may be more fruitful as it will allow the students to keep the correct stance in mind while reading, they will not have to re-read the text when they encounter tasks requiring an aesthetic stance.

Also, as Rosenblatt (1994) puts it, "moments may intervene in a generally aesthetic reading when the reader is more concerned with the information being acquired, that with the experienced meaning", meaning that the situation can also be reversed. Some parts of a text may therefore not reward any qualitative attention, but are being introduced "to provide the reader with background information, or a conceptual framework, as a necessary foundation for the parts in which the work is to be more immediately experienced" (p.38). Therefore, these texts need not be unnecessary, but rather provide specific information making it easier

for the students to understand the rest of the text and perhaps also better respond to it. McKay (2000) brings up the aspect of tasks: “In aesthetic reading, a reader often relates his or her world of experience to the text. After reading the passage, students might be asked if anything similar has ever happened to them” (p.197), thereby agreeing with Christenbury (1992): “Requesting that students make links to personal experience is a paramount activity in reader-response classrooms. […] While personal experience is shared and cited, the students […] pay close attention to the text […] using it to buttress their points” (p.39-40). Sharing experiences and responses after reading a text may also strengthen the students' feeling of self and make them define and reflect on their own values and experiences, as Rosenblatt describes it: “[…] the new experience challenges the reader’s assumptions and understandings, he may be stimulated to clarify his own values, his own prior sense of the world and its possibilities” (1994, p.145). McKay suggests another activity in connection to this type of reading: “Since in aesthetic reading, readers often make judgments about the characters, another follow-up activity might involve having the students comment on their opinion […]” (p.197). Other activities within reader response theory may include sharing initial responses to a text, writing down ones reflections in a diary or a journal, schema activation, group discussions, role plays and dramatizations (Paran 2008, p.481).

2.3.4 The pedagogical aspect of reader response theory

Christenbury (1992) proposes another dimension to reader response theory and how it works in classrooms, namely the importance of making the students important and to make them feel like they have something to offer to the discussion of literature. By suggesting that the writer and the reader have the same ideas and feelings, they are “allied, equal, and in the same human territory. Finally, it has the effect of giving the student intellectual standing and confidence” (p.33). For this to happen, there needs to be a focus on reader response as a valid form of teaching literature, where the teacher “through both choice of literature that can inspire response and a methodology that allows students to respond, becomes not the knowledge giver or the sole truth teller, but a fellow reader and questioner” (p.33). This may also strengthen the students' confidence in that they also are “right” in their own reasoning. Christenbury also argues that reader response demands an engagement with literature that requires the students to be able to use their own language to describe their feelings, rather than simply answering comprehension questions using a more formulaic language. If they are to use reader response in the classroom, the students “[…] must converse: speak at length,

pause, argue, question. They should not be confined to one-word, one-phrase answers in response to a teacher's question and in a pattern determined by the teacher" (p.36). This approach may also strengthen the students' sense of identity and at the same time his or her understanding of the text itself; reading becomes an interactive process by encouraging personal opinion and revision. The process may help to build and develop a certain literary work, clarifying the reader's "poem" - "Readers may discover and acknowledge more than one valid interpretation, each supported by the text. This will help them to understand their own interpretive experiences and strategies, as differentiated from those of others, and to understand themselves" (Karolides 1992, p.28). Rosenblatt (1994) presents a similar argument, claiming that to learn what others have made of and thought about a text can enforce one's own insight and relationship with it, "through such interchange he can discover how people bring different temperaments, different literary and life experiences, to the text have engaged in very different transactions with it" (p.146).

This is the theoretical framework I will use when discussing tasks in the light of reader response theory, the most important aspect of the theory being the aesthetic and efferent reading types, and which of these seems to be more dominant in the textbooks in my material. In the next section I will present the opposing view of literature, namely New Criticism.

2.4 New Criticism

New Criticism springs from the Formalist literary theory, and was heavily influenced by I.A. Richards's 1924 work, *Principles of Literary Criticism*. The term itself is likely to have come from John Crowe Ransom's work, *The New Criticism*, from 1941 (Abele 1993).

The main idea behind New Criticism was to treat the literary text "as an object essentially independent of its author and its historical context" (Jefferson 1986, p.73), "defining content not just as what is said but as the way in which things are said" (p.14). It was seen as "necessary to downgrade the author, in order to guarantee the independence of literary studies" (p.15). Basically, the text was the main focus, and nothing else. Karolides (1992) further explains this notion, as in New Criticism, the study of the text in isolation of the author rejects biographical and social factors and focuses on form, for example genre, identifying structural patterns; examining the language, symbols and images that are used, and how these elements are "objectively analyzed in relation to their literary effects" (p.29).

Unlike other reader theories, the reader, the background of the text or the author, or even social and political conditions during the time the work was written, mean nothing when analyzing a text, it is the text itself and only that which is to be scrutinized. Corcoran (1992, p.51) calls it a focus on "the words on the page".

> *The New Critical focus on […]"the words on the page," requires a diligent yet self-effacing reader who works extremely hard at extracting the "hidden meaning" of the text, yet deliberately eschews any contaminating knowledge of either the context or intention of the writer, or any potentially distracting elements in the reader's own personal history.*

This way, students can encounter texts they are not familiar with and of which they will know nothing else but the text, and be expected to analyze it. Two of the most prominent theorists within New Criticism were William K. Wimsatt and Monroe Beardsley, who saw literature, particularly poems, as an object in the public domain and not the private creation of an individual: "The author's experience and intentions at the time of writing are matters of purely historical interest, that do not – contrary to the 'intentional fallacy' – in any way determine the meaning, effect or function of his creation" (Jefferson 1986, p.81), the 'intentional fallacy' being the mistake of attempting to understand the author's intentions when interpreting a literary work (Abele 1993).

"What counts from the viewpoint of criticism is only what is embodied in the text, and that is wholly accessible to anyone with a knowledge of the language and culture to which the text belongs" (Jefferson 1986, p.81), making the author's experience less important. Therefore, the reader needs knowledge of the English language and the relevant culture, so in this respect the text is not as autonomous at it may seem at first, but if one does not know the language too well, one may not be able to read the text, and a lack of knowledge about culture will also prohibit an understanding of the vocabulary and terms used in the text. "As for the author's intentions, what counts is only whether he has succeeded in writing poetry, and that too can be discerned by reference to the text alone" and by that a knowledge of genre is implied, and also a focus on "good vs. bad" literature. I will now move on to a front figure for this movement, I.A. Richards, who also have some diverging theories on this subject.

2.4.1 I. A. Richards

Another prominent figure in the New Criticism movement was Ivor Armstrong Richards (1893-1979) who, despite being a part of this movement, he also presented ideas that would not be typically New Critical, with similarities to reader response theory. Richards focused on the part of the reader as well, with some parallels to transactional theory as presented by Rosenblatt, as he was occupied with the "'relevant mental condition' which the critic/reader must recreate within himself is assumed also to be the mental condition of the author" (Jefferson 1986, p.76-77). From this we can clearly see where Richards' theories diverge from New Criticism, which does not pay the author any attention, and in which Richards wants the reader to assume the position of the author. Richards, as cited by Jefferson (1986), claims that the right kind of reader "[…] manages to recreate in himself more or less completely the collection of impulses which the poet expressed in the poem […] the 'relevant experience of the poet when contemplating the completed composition'" (p.77). Even though there is still no focus on the "surroundings" of the poem that may or may not affect the poem or the reader, Richards opens up for an analysis based on what the readers think that the poet may have felt, the reasons for writing and perhaps also a response to his own work. Jefferson continues to say that some of the features of Richards' theory have become established parts of a critical tradition, such as close reading and attention to detail: "His interest was to ensure that poetry was read with the right kind of attention, not to analyze or explain the textual means by which its effect is achieved" (p.79). Although Richards was occupied with these features, as were the New Critics as a whole, his focus is not just on the text by itself, but what the author is able to bring forth in his readers by what he has written. Jefferson continues to say that Richards, when compared to more modern literary theories in which the text is seen as being independent of the author, Richards treats the text simply as a transparent medium, "a mere vehicle for conveying the experience of the author to the reader". Richards never doubts that it is possible or desirable for the critic to achieve the mental condition of the author, but only recognizes that it is difficult (p.77).

T.S. Eliot, who is often mentioned together with Richards in terms of ways of thinking, has a stance opposed to Richards'. He refused to accept that poetry was simply a vehicle for communicating the author's experience to the reader. "'Poetry,' he argued (1920, p.52-53), 'is not a turning loose of emotion but an escape from emotion; it is not the expression of personality, but an escape from personality'" (Jefferson 1986, p.80). Therefore,

the focus on the author and the author's feelings conveyed through the text need not be relevant, as the author may also have made himself not important -"what a poem means is as much what it means to others as what it means to the author". In this way, Eliot agrees with a theory more along the lines of reader response theory, at least on this matter. Rosenblatt (1994, p.144) shows us how Richards, however, does not necessarily agree to the same:

> *Richards speaks of "mnemonic irrelevances": "misleading effects of the reader's being reminded of some personal scene or adventure […] which may have nothing to do with the poem". Such memories may indeed lead to a faulty reading and should be discounted, ignored, cleared away. But we must keep in mind that it is our memories, our mnemonic relevances that make it possible for us to have a literary experience at all.*

2.4.2 New Criticism in practice

How are this theory and these ideas still evident in the teaching of literature, and what are the implications of teaching only by the theories of New Criticism? Karolides (1992) argues that the elements which were ignored in New Criticism, such as biographical and social factors and focus on form and exploring the language, need not be a part of an analysis as they may be unhelpful with regard to understanding. If they are introduced prior to reading or at the outset of discussion, they may have the effect of derailing the reader's transaction with the text and denying the readers the opportunity to attend to and develop that experience. "Furthermore, by focusing on content and form and on knowledge about literature, these approaches diminish the capacity of literature to portray and enliven the human experience for readers" (p.29). By omitting information about the author and the background, readers are able to feel more free to interpret the text as they see it, and by their own interpretation of words, form and the general theme. Also, as Karolides says, through a focus on genre specifics and form, students may be led to read the text with this in mind, and avoid grasping the actual content and prohibit the "human experience" – that way, the text need not even be authentic, as long as it is representative of the genre or a certain form.

Malmgren (1997), on the other hand, disagrees with Karolides: "The risk of applying New Critical reading methods is that the students may be hesitant and suppress their free associations and relations to their own experiences in their reading" (p.214-215, my translation). This means that even if the students get associations from reading which do not

necessarily have anything to do with the text itself, that is a good thing and may actually evoke an appreciation of literature. This because even though the student may not react to the text itself at first, he might still get the feeling that it is about something he can relate to, and perhaps identify with. Jefferson (1986) elaborates on this idea by discussing causes for misinterpretation in student responses, that anything the readers bring to the reading, be it feelings, ways of reading or personal experiences, will distort their response to the text: "when such errors can be corrected, they will again "be open to the poet's mental condition, and therefore to the correct experience of the poem". It is a matter of "approaching the text with the right kind of attention" (p.177). However, the "right kind of attention" will obviously vary from theory to theory. However, in this case the reader should be a "tabula rasa", and when reading the reader should ideally focus on form, genre specifics, trying to interpret the authors' experience (if the reading is inspired by Richards), and not make assumptions about anything else. The texts in question should also be separate from any other subjects or topics, and unmarked with regard to author and year of publication. To give an example, English exams in Norwegian high schools from 1980 to 1984 actually featured such an unmarked text. This was usually an excerpt from a novel or a short story, and the exam questions were based on comprehension questions and describing characters, and then using a topic or theme from the excerpt to write a personal essay (Ibsen 2000).

2.5 Summary of reader response theory vs. New Criticism

To sum up, the main difference between New Criticism/Richards and reader response theory is that in the latter, there is a higher acceptance for the students' opinion based on their own experience and feelings that are evoked by reading the text, in fact, that is the goal of the reading. In New Criticism/Richards' theory however, there is no focus on the reader's own feelings, as he is to interpret the author's feelings, not his own, and in New Criticism, neither the author nor the reader are really of any importance. The text is merely a document, which the student can analyze with regard to the text itself and nothing else, as it is a document completely independent from its author and historical context. Comparing this to reader response theory, in which a text is not seen as a text before someone can experience it and define it from the effects it may have on the reader, there are some significantly different aspects in these theories, even though they have a similar origin. Which of these theories is

more represented in today's textbooks will hopefully become evident as the textbooks and their tasks are analyzed. The last section of this chapter presents some theories around the use of tasks when teaching literature.

2.6 Task theory and how to work with the texts

In most cases, the literary texts available in these textbooks have at least one type of task, either pre-reading tasks or post-reading tasks, or both. They also include a number of different tasks within these categories, especially post-reading. In this section I will present a brief theoretical framework for why such tasks can be fruitful and what they may generate in terms of learning. I will start by presenting relevant theories for pre-reading tasks, mid-reading tasks and post-reading tasks, and then focus on different types of tasks within these categories.

2.6.1 Pre-reading tasks

According to Kelly (1992), "[…] pre-reading activities are necessary to provide the bridge between a student's experience and the literature" and "[…] a pre-reading activity helps students connect their personal experiences with literature. The students understood the text, not from a literary stance but from personal associations […]" (p.87). Therefore, a typical pre-reading task will try to connect with the student by having them reflect on what they think the text is about, for example by the title of the text, or providing them with a short summary of the text or information about the historical and/or cultural background of the text. "Following the findings of schema theory, interactive models of reading suggest that readers reconstruct the text information, based on the text, and on the prior knowledge available to them", says Rivas (1999). The following is a short explanation of this phenomenon.

Schema theory

Schema theory is a learning theory which views organized knowledge as an elaborate network of abstract mental structures which represent one's understanding of the world (SIL International 1998). These mental structures are based on our previous experiences, and to understand new information, we need to already have some similar information in order to make connections between the old and the new information. When the new information is understood, our existing schemata grow. Therefore, when presented with that specific situation, we know what to expect – for example, if we are asked to describe a religious

holiday, we may only know of holidays within our own religion, whereas another students may be part of another religion where the holidays are completely different. Non-religious students may not have developed a schema for this at all. When we encounter a situation which we have never encountered before, and therefore do not have a schema for it, we may not comprehend what is happening or dismiss it as irrelevant, especially if it is very different from the schema we have for a similar situation. This goes for real life situations and situations we may encounter while reading a text, and especially when we are to take part in a cross-cultural situation. Also, as our schemata are also based on our own attitudes, points of view and biases, it will influence a reading by making it easier or harder to comprehend, based on the match of our own schema and the situation in the text. We will always compare the information of the text with that which we know of, and therefore there may be some misunderstandings as certain terms may mean different things in different cultures, for example. Rivas continues by citing Carrell (1988) and Barnett (1989) who argue that if the students do not have an appropriate schema before their reading, this information should be provided to them, and stresses the relevance of the reader's knowledge for successful comprehension of texts.

Therefore, in order for all the students to have a somewhat equal amount of prior knowledge about the background of the text, such information should in most cases be given to them prior to reading. Long (2000) agrees that it is generally helpful to ask a series of questions before reading the text, as an attempt to create "the right mental attitude for receptivity, a process known as 'set induction' […] They [possible questions/tasks] are in no sense a test, even of general knowledge, and above all are designed to stimulate response, and a willingness to respond" (p.47). The question is whether "knowing it all" up front may evoke less genuine responses than if the students were presented with an "unknown" text. There is also a question of how closely related to the text the pre-reading tasks should be – whether they are actively dealing with the content of the text or are they just there to activate a small part of the student's content schema that may have something to do with the text. "[…] Pre-reading activities must be directly, not obliquely, connected to the literature […] unconnected pre-reading activities seemed to confuse students, making it more difficult for them to respond to the text" (Kelly 1992, p.87). Many pre-reading exercises in my material had pre-reading tasks which were not necessarily understood to be connected to the texts, if so it was only by association, and these tasks could seem to be distracting the students from the text completely. Probst (1992) argues that these types of tasks are not necessarily pointless, and

that while a task may seem to be off the point and not necessarily dealing with the text in question, writing about the reflections one may have can be valuable as it may inspire and motivate the student as he/she is able to write from his/her own life history and memories. Ultimately, this experience may be connected to other literary experiences, "giving the student a broader base from which to forge understanding of self and world – and potentially of the text itself" (p.118). Rivas (1999) mentions that another purpose of pre-reading tasks may be to provide language preparation (p.15), which could be applied by having students clarify certain terms and other words that are central but may be unfamiliar or difficult to understand, this in order to ease the reading flow. Most of the texts in the textbooks in my material do have sections with some of the vocabulary used in the texts, explained and translated to Norwegian.

2.6.2 Mid-reading tasks

I have not included mid-reading tasks in this study because this type of task is not represented in most of my material. However, one of the textbooks in my material applies them, usually to the short stories, and the tasks are usually about text comprehension, basically what is happening in the text, or specific details about the text, for example descriptions. This allows the students and the teacher to stop the reading for a short while and solve these tasks, in order to have all the students understand what is happening in the story before they continue the reading. In this respect they may be similar to both pre-reading and post-reading tasks, by ensuring that difficult terms are explained and understood, and the students will be reminded of what the text is about and what the storyline is.

2.6.3 Post-reading tasks

In comparison to pre-reading exercises, the types and number of tasks in this category is usually larger, as the students will have read the text and reached a conclusion about it, whether they liked it or not, what they did not understand, etc. At this point, the tasks' motive is not to prepare the students for what they are about to read, but rather to work through what they experienced during the reading. "The post-reading phase helps learners to consolidate what they have read and, at the same time, aims to relate the text to the learners' experience, knowledge, and opinions" (Rivas 1999, p.18). Often in post-reading tasks, the aim is to put the literary text into a context in which reading is integrated with other skills. This can make

the array of different post-reading tasks very diverse, and may also have tasks which can teach the students something within all the basic skills, especially language acquisition. Long (2000) argues that "[…] the questions [to the text] are an aid to response, leading the learner/reader to get an insight into the text which might not be possible otherwise" (p.45). Obviously, reading a literary text without asking any questions about it, or working with it at all will not be very pedagogical. He also mentions that "variation of presentation and questioning is important in holding interest" (p.51), which may be the reason for the large diversity of tasks, even within those task types that are relevant for this study. These tasks can be divided into two or three rather comprehensive categories: talking about the text and writing about/from the text, but also text comprehension. These will now be presented in turn.

Talking about the text

Rosenblatt (1994) feels very strongly about talking about and discussing the text in the classroom as learning what their classmates have made of the relevant text, may lead to new insight into the students' own relationship with the text: "[…] Through […] interchange he can discover how people bring different temperaments, different literary and life experiences, to the text have engaged in very different transactions with it" (p.146). By doing this, the students are presented with a more reader-centered way of reading, and they may learn to appreciate the different opinions and experiences different people may have with a text, and by that appreciate the differences in people in general. By sharing experiences and emotions this way, the relationship between the students may also be strengthened. Yang (2001), as cited in Paran's article (2008, p.479), used questionnaires and interviews, and found strong support for the use of literature circles in a class of adult learners.

> *The interviews suggested that the students felt that the discussion of the novel they were reading were 'more "substantial" than simply answering grammar questions' […] students in the class where literature was taught in a more student-centered way showed a much more positive attitude to the literature used in the class.*

Although this study was done among Asian students, they were nevertheless EFL students, which may make the study and its results relevant for other EFL students as well. Another study from Paran's article (2008) was done by Boyd and Maloof, who found that through connecting literature to the students' own lives, "classroom talk was more likely to extend

into discourse when the students did not have to interpret the meaning of "Literature" and relied on their own experiences and expertise to talk about a cultural topic" (p.475).

Writing about/from the text

Duff (1999) explains why one does not always have to have an oral discussion about the text: "To allow the students the privacy of their own thoughts and feeling, the writing assignment was completed without discussion, because discussion in this setting oftentimes may be an intrusion, chilling the emotions" (p.209). In this case, having the students write down their immediate responses before sharing them with the rest of the class may feel safer to some students, as they are able to respond to the text but they are not necessarily required to share that response with anyone else, which may evoke a more genuine response. Duff also suggests that through letting students do role playing or write letters, "they might be their own opposites in personality, sex, and race. Creating dialogue from their roles would necessitate their (a) internalizing the character and (b) analyzing their responses by reflection, their attempt to make meaning of this experience" (p.217). Carter (2000) thinks that tasks asking the students to predict or write a new storyline or ending to a text without knowing the original ending might be a good task: "[…] a heightened degree of attentiveness to the story can be brought about by prediction. There is increased involvement from the natural desire of seeing one's own expectations fulfilled or contravened" (p.112). He agrees with Brumfit (2000): "[…] the attempt to write literature might teach students something about the mind of the writer, helping them to see how the writer of poetry or fiction sees and thinks" (p.122)

Text comprehension and interpretation

Nearly all the literary texts in the textbooks which make up the material in this study have comprehension questions as the first category of tasks preceding the text. These questions are usually there to control how much the students have actually understood during the reading of the text and how much they remember, such as details about place or characters, what happens, etc. However, these tasks may also ask the students why they think a character did what he did or why something happened, based on what they have read into what the text says. This requires them to "read between the lines" and see the text as something which could happen in real life. Bleich (1980) discusses James R. Wilson's study from 1966 in which he concluded that "classroom discussion of responses increased the reader's

interpretive fluency", based on his own and James R. Squire's studies performed in 1956, which showed that among student responses, interpretation of the text had a predominant role (p.138-139) However, as self-involvement also played a large part in Squire's study, Wilson speculated whether "[…] most subjects can begin to concern themselves only with questions which have personal importance. That is to say, interpretation may be a secondary predicative process, impossible without initial self-involvement" (p.140). Therefore, having some pre-reading tasks or tasks that are based on reader-centered approaches may be more fruitful to have as the first tasks preceding the text.

However, Mattix, as cited by Paran (2008), adds that "before they can deal with aesthetic elements of a poem, L2 learners need to reach an understanding of the language and the meaning of the poem" (p.476). This could explain the use of reading comprehension tasks usually being the first tasks the students encounter after having read a text. Many of the texts in the textbooks are also introduced with a small vocabulary list, in order to ease the reading. Carter (2000) is positive towards the use of summary as a task: "The technique should be seen rather as an enabling device for students in their personal process of interpretation or engagement with the text [than just a paraphrasing]" (p.114), a distinction which is important to make as many tasks will simply ask the students to write a summary which will most often turn out as a rather comprehensive paraphrasing of the text. Nevertheless, according to Macalister (2010), comprehension question also have the function of monitoring the extent to which readers have made meaning of the text, and notes that the use of comprehension questions is often accepted uncritically, that their use in reading can be overdone, leading to "the death by comprehension questions syndrome" (p.4).

These three types of tasks and their traits are evident in the analysis of the texts and tasks in chapter 5, where they have been made into several different categories which illustrate the diversity of tasks within the four textbooks in my material.

2.7 Chapter summary

In this chapter I have explained the theoretical framework I will use in this thesis, starting with a presentation of why literature in English teaching is important and why it could be fruitful, along with some theoretical perspectives on how it could be done. I also presented some results from different surveys in reading from the past years, as well as suggestions to

what kinds of texts should ideally be used and also the aspect of authentic texts. From that I moved on to theories on reading and working with literature, first reader response theory, and Louise Rosenblatt's transactional theory of reading and aesthetic vs. efferent stances when reading. I summed up by explaining how this theory works in practice. I then presented New Criticism and I.A.Richards as an opposing theory, even though Richards' theories have some similarities to reader response theory as well. I also suggested how New Criticism would be used in practice, before summing up the differences between the two theories. Finally I presented some theoretical perspectives on the use of different tasks in literature teaching and why different types of tasks could be fruitful in English teaching. In the following chapter I will go through the methodology I will apply to this thesis and to my analysis.

3 Methodology

In this thesis, I examine four textbooks used in VG1 English, with particular emphasis on the tasks connected to the literary texts in these. This thesis will attempt to discover how these textbooks treat the literary texts they include, how they are used - based on textbook design and the use of tasks, and what differences there are between the textbooks. To do this I will use the theories and theoretical approaches as presented in the previous chapter, and the methodology I will present in this chapter. I chose four different VG1 English textbooks from the Knowledge Promotion (LK06) as my material for this study, the only criteria for choosing them was that they had a good variety of literary texts. In the next section I will go further into my selection and how it was performed.

3.1 Gathering information and material

The textbooks I chose *are eXperience – Engelsk for VG1 studieforberedende utdanningsprogram*, published by Gyldendal Norsk Forlag AS in 2006, 1st edition; *Passage – Engelsk VG1 studieforberedende program*, published by Cappelen Damm in 2009, 4th edition; *Stunt – Engelsk for vg1 studieforberedende utdanningsprogram*, published by Det Norske Samlaget in 2009, 1st edition; and *Targets – Engelsk VG1*, published by H. Aschehoug & Co in 2009, 3rd edition. These textbooks also have a web page with most of the content from the textbook plus some more, available both for students and teachers. In these the students can find other tasks that are based on the students using the Internet to find information, as well as other interactive and multimodal tasks. The teachers may find examples of teaching designs, or ideas on what to do in plenary session with the class.

Unfortunately I have not been able to acquire sales numbers for these four textbooks and therefore cannot say anything about how many of each textbook are actually in use today. I had hoped to be able to present sales numbers from 2009 and 2010, as 2009 was the first year in which each high school bought the textbooks for the students, in previous years, students bought textbooks themselves according to which textbook the school had chosen to use.

My selection of textbooks was, as stated further up, rather random, I chose four textbooks as there are a number of textbooks and material for this study - at the time of

selection, the total number of textbooks and similar sources available for this subject was about 8 different sources. In addition to the textbooks I chose, there is *@cross* by Cappelen Damm, *Gateways* by Aschehoug, *Mind the Gap* by Fagbokforlaget and the free-of-charge Internet portal *National Digital Learning Arena (NDLA)*. The latter is an alternative to ordinary textbooks, and the outcome of a cooperative project involving the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research and 18 country councils throughout Norway. When selecting my material, I could get my hands on about 6 of these - so I chose those who seemed fairly similar in design and general layout, and that also had a fair number of literary texts. By fair number I mean that I did not want them to be too different with regard to the number of texts, but rather have the same diversity when it came to genres and a balance between more modern and more classic texts. The textbooks/sources which I did look at but did not select were NDLA and *@cross*. The reason why I did not choose them is that I did not think I could successfully compare an Internet-based source with ordinary textbooks - I also feel that the obvious differences between a printed and a digital medium would demand too much attention and would undermine the aim of this study. *@cross* was not selected simply because its layout with regard to the literature was completely different from the others; in *@cross*, all the literary texts were placed in an individual section as the last chapter of the textbook. Although it would be interesting to find out why they have chosen to do this, it would be too large a contrast. The similarities and differences in the four textbooks I did choose which I discovered when studying them more closely, will be presented in the next chapters. In the next section, I will explain my methodical approach in this study.

3.2 My methodical approach

When starting to work with this material, I envisioned it as a qualitative analysis, which is defined by Johannessen and Tufte (2009) as trying to make sense out of a large amount of unstructured data and identifying patterns, as there was a lot of written material, i.e. the tasks, that were not easily countable. I needed to find some common denominators among this material, and try to code and organize the tasks in a way that would make it easier to group the different units that I have chosen to focus on, namely the texts and the tasks, and I would then be able to count them. This meant using content analysis.

Content analysis

Stemler (2001) defines content analysis as "a systematic, replicable technique for compressing many words of text into fewer content categories based on explicit rules of coding". Having to deal with a large number of different tasks with different wording, this is clearly the methodical approach I had to apply. Stemler continues to say that content analysis is also useful for examining trends and patterns in documents, in my thesis I will acknowledge the patterns in the different tasks in order to classify them according to these patterns, and then categorize them into smaller units of analysis. Furthermore, as Stemler quotes Weber, to be able to make valid inferences from the text, "it is important that the classification procedure be reliable in the sense of being consistent". There is, of course, an overhanging risk that the classification of tasks has not been consistent enough - due to human error. This is because I have classified them and created categories and done the coding myself, without having someone re-analyze the material as a control. There may be some tasks that may belong to more categories than one because the task is not as definitive, to which I have focused on one part of the tasks and overlooked the rest. The empirical aspect of the study lies in the use of quite tangible material, namely the textbooks themselves. There is a combination between what Stemler calls "emergent coding" and "a priori coding involved" – in emergent coding, the classification and categorizing happens *after* examining the data; in a priori coding, the coding and categorizing, which will be based on theory, happens *before* the analysis of the data. Even though I have not used the material to form a theory, I will use existing theory to shed light on the material and findings in attempt to analyze and explain them.

Validity

The question of validity is central in this approach to the study. As I have only looked at approximately 50% of all available VG1 English textbooks and similar sources out there, to achieve external validity, "[…] the extent to which the results of a study are generalizable or transferable" (Howell 2005) is not possible in this study. If there turns out to be many similarities in how the different textbooks use texts and tasks, one can of course infer that the other textbooks may also be similar to these and that these procedures show signs of common tendencies in textbooks, and perhaps also teaching, today, but one cannot be sure that this is the case. Furthermore, as there is no way of finding out how the textbooks are actually used in

classrooms, the only thing this study will show is how these four textbooks use literary texts through what tasks go with them. When it comes to internal validity, whether there is construct validity in this study can be discussed: as it "seeks agreement between a theoretical concept and a specific measuring device or procedure", I have categorized the tasks into categories which both reflect the task's content and also what theories seems to be reflected in them. I feel that tasks are the textbook's way of controlling what is done with literary texts, and they also demonstrate what purpose textbook writers intend the literary texts to have, and what the end result of working with these texts is supposed to be, whether it is linguistic competence, literary competence, or something completely different. However, the theories I have chosen to use in the analysis may not have been correctly operationalized, meaning that while I have chosen what theories I wanted to use to shed light on the findings, I have deliberately overlooked others. If the tasks have been correctly categorized with a minimum of errors, meaning that the categories actually say something about what they are supposed to say something about, I will also have content validity, according to Howell.

Because I wanted to focus on literary texts and how it is used in English VG1 textbooks by looking at the tasks connected to these texts, I have had to exclude many texts and tasks in order to define my materials and what variables this particular focus would require. As internal validity is defined by Howell as "the rigor with which the study was conducted (e.g., the study's design, the care taken to conduct measurements, and decisions concerning what was and wasn't measured)", I feel that the choices I have made regarding what material I wanted to use and what has been analyzed does in fact measure what I wanted to measure. I have examined how literary texts are used by looking at layouts, labeling and categorizing done by the textbooks, and what tasks are connected to these texts by categorizing them based on their content and how these tasks are connected to the literary texts. I have chosen to only look at the tasks which are directly connected to the text in question. Of the post-reading tasks in these textbooks, this choice excludes possible grammar tasks, language learning tasks, etc., which are not connected to the text but which is featured with the tasks that are connected to the text. I have done this because I felt that the tasks that are not connected to the literary text does not have anything to do with these texts, these tasks could be placed anywhere, and as I wanted a focus on literature, I decided to omit these tasks.

In the following sections I will go further into how the relevant texts and tasks have been classified and categorized, starting with the literary texts.

3.3 Classification of the literary texts

In each textbook I have followed the list of contents when choosing whether to add a text to this study or not. I specifically wanted to take a look at three main types of literary texts that reoccur in English textbooks, namely the poem, the short story and the novel excerpts. In this kind of textbooks, the literary texts are usually already classified with regard to genre, and I simply chose them from there. This means that the definition of genre is up to the textbook writers. I have not analyzed the texts to control whether they "really" are the genres the textbooks claim.

There were also other genres represented in the textbooks, such as song lyrics, drama excerpts and other similar texts in several textbooks which some may consider literary texts. I have not included these texts in my analysis in order to make the analysis less comprehensive and to really focus on literary texts. Nor have literary texts that are presented only as listening exercises or that is in any way only intended to be listened to, been included either. Poems that are not included in the list of contents are not included in the analysis either. There were a few poems in the textbooks that were not acknowledged in the list if contents, but it seems that they are mostly there to illustrate a topic, not for the general literary experience itself as the textbook does not have tasks connected to these.

The different texts in each textbook were then counted along with the rest of the texts of that specific genre. This was helpful in order to get an overview of what the different textbooks could offer, and might also say something about the specific textbook's approach to literature. I will not go further into what kinds of irrelevant texts there are in each textbook. Instead, I will comment briefly on it when presenting the different textbooks in the next chapter, focusing particularly on what texts that seems representative of the different textbooks and what kinds of texts there are in general. The texts that two or more textbooks have in common will be discussed in detail, and the tasks connected to them in the different textbooks, compared in chapters 5 and 6. Details on what texts are available in which textbook can be found in appendix 1-4 where they are listed along with their given genre and other details if relevant.

3.4 Classification of the tasks

In this study, a task is defined as one or more questions preceding and/or following the specific literary text the students are going to/have read, which the student has to answer or reflect on. There are usually a number of tasks for each text, and the tasks may be grouped by the textbooks into tasks about reading, tasks about writing, tasks about speaking, etc. These will ask different things of the student, for example to write something connected to the text, to have a group conversation about a topic, etc. The tasks in these textbooks were not as easy to categorize as the literary texts, as they are not pre-categorized other than what their "medium" is (speaking, writing etc.). I had to create a system that would be comprehensive enough to cover all the relevant task types, namely those which were actually connected to the literary text, but also a system that would have criteria narrow enough to be more definite and not too extensive. I also needed to decide what tasks I would want to include and the criteria for this. Should I account for all tasks following immediately after a literary text or just the tasks preceding it, should I focus on the tasks that were specifically about writing, reading or speaking, and so on.

I decided to focus on the pre-reading tasks, which seemed to be pretty similar and present in all the textbooks. I also wanted to focus on the post-reading tasks that were directly connected to the text in question, meaning that they ask the students about something related to the text, such as characters, plot, the author etc., and not tasks which use the text to teach other things, such as grammar or writing strategies, for example. I also wanted to create categories that would be descriptive of the general nature of the textbook, meaning that they reflect the original content of the task and how it reflects the content of the textbook. Another goal was to create categories that would reflect the relevant theories that I use, so that it is quite clear what kind of theory would be relevant to use to describe it, and what is reflected in the task/category itself. As mentioned, these findings will be presented in chapter 5 and in chapter 6 I will discuss these findings according to theory. How I categorized the tasks will be explained in the next sections, starting with pre-reading tasks.

3.4.1 Classification of pre-reading tasks

Although the pre-reading tasks are fewer in number than the post-reading tasks, I have counted both types of tasks with the same categorical perspective. However, I had to create

other categories for this specific kind of task as the general wording is different from the post-reading tasks.

The pre-reading tasks are tasks that precede the text. There may be just the one task, a simple question based on facts, or a more loosely formed question based on retrieving past experiences or experiences similar to that described in the text which the students are about to read. At times there may be a mix of the two types of tasks: a paragraph with some facts about the text or the text's context or background, and then some questions asking the students what they already know about this topic etc. The important point about these tasks is that they precede the text. Whether they are placed at the top of the page over the title of the text or next to the title, they will still be considered pre-reading tasks, as they are by their placement intended to be done before reading the text. The titles of the pre-reading task section usually also makes it clear what they are, such as "Points of departure" or simply "Pre-reading".

The pre-reading tasks were sorted into the following categories:

- Associations to title and content prediction
- Reflecting on experiences
- General reflections and opinions on a topic
- The text, genre specifics, its background and content
- Questions regarding the subject of English in general
- Being or describing a character

In the following section I will present these in further detail.

Associations to title and content prediction

These tasks will basically ask the students what they associate with the title, whether it asks about the actual title or words used in the title. They may also be asked whether they would like to continue reading after having read the title or the title and a short extract, what expectations they have for the story, or to continue the story themselves after having read just the title or the title and a short extract. The tasks may also be about reflecting on what the title in itself means or what kinds of reflections they do when presented with the title or a short extract of the text.

Reflecting on experiences

These pre-reading tasks will ask the students "Have you ever experienced…" or "How would you feel if…", or similar sentiments. They may be asking the students about a specific experience, or if they can imagine having to experience something, usually something that will happen in the text. The tasks are also largely based on either pair-, group- or class discussions.

General reflections and opinions on a topic

These tasks may be somewhat similar to the previous group, but will ask the students about their opinions or what they feel about a certain topic which will most likely occur in the text they are about to read. It could be cultural phenomena, aspects from their own lives as young adults, etc., but it is not personal experiences these tasks are asking for. The answers to these tasks are often also supposed to be discussed, either in pairs or in groups.

The text, genre specifics, its background and content

There are very few tasks in this group overall, but the tasks are usually asking students to define terms, describing the genre of the text, explain a difference between terms – these tasks will often clarify some of the content for the students. It also deals with expectations through the focus on genre.

Questions regarding the subject of English in general

These are tasks which are connected to the general theme of the text, but they usually use the texts to fulfill other goals of the subject, such as pointing out differences in different varieties of English, discussing how the language is used, etc. Some tasks ask the students to use keywords to make their own texts, based on keywords from the text they are about to read, are only obliquely connected to the text. These more generic tasks did not have to be connected to a specific literary text.

Being or describing a character

There are very few tasks in this category, basically because this type of task would be more fruitful to do after having read the text. The tasks will ask the students to reflect on why the

character does what he/she does, or describing other characters, either from memory or from the text.

In the following, these six categories will be used to classify all the relevant pre-reading tasks in my material. Most of the relevant pre-reading tasks will fit into one or perhaps more of these categories, however, it is the main idea of the task that decides which category it belongs to. In chapter 5 we will see how many tasks there are in each of these categories in the textbooks. In the next section the categories for post-reading tasks will be presented.

3.4.2 Classification of post-reading tasks

The post-reading tasks are tasks that follow immediately after a literary text – there should not really be any doubt about which they are. This group of tasks is far more extensive than the pre-reading tasks, as they are to be undertaken when the students have finished reading, or at least that is the intention of the textbook. As mentioned, I have chosen to group them all as "post-reading tasks", not differing between what type of task they are presented as in the textbook, which might be writing, reading, speaking, etc., as many of the textbook have these groupings. One reason for this is that I found some of the groupings rather arbitrary, there were for example some speaking tasks under a "Writing" heading. Another reason why I will not go further into what type of tasks they are is that the focus is on the content of the task, basically, what the task(s) wants the students to do, it does not really matter *how* they are supposed to do it. Therefore, the categories are based only on content, not *how* they are supposed to be executed according to the textbook. If it is of particular interest, I might mention these aspects in the analysis.

As mentioned above, I deliberately chose only those post-reading tasks that were directly connected to the text in question, meaning that they ask the students about something related to the text within the topics covered in the categories I will present further down. Many of the literary texts are used to point out examples of other topics, for example grammar, or the texts are used as background material for a larger project in which the students are to use the information retrieved from the text and go online to find more information, turning the literary text into a mere factual text. Although these tasks also have an important purpose, the literary focus is missing in these tasks, which made me exclude them from my study. The tasks that were relevant have been counted separately, meaning that

in the hypothetical Task 1, there are 6 tasks if the questions/tasks go from A to F, 3 tasks if the questions go from A to C, and so on. They are also considered separately, meaning that if e.g. tasks A, B and C deal with comprehension and tasks D, E and F ask the students to relate to what is happening in the text, there are 3 tasks from one category and 3 from another, and they will be counted as such. If there is more than one question within one task, for example task 2B asking "What did you like about the text? What did you not like?", they will be counted as one task, not two. If these questions within the same task belong to two different categories, it will be the dominant purpose of the tasks which decides which category the task is placed in.

Categorizing the post-reading tasks

The post-reading tasks were categorized as follows:

- Reading comprehension and details
- Genre analysis and genre specifics
- Reflecting on and analyzing the content of the text
- Being a character
- Dealing with the author and narrative choices
- Sharing experiences

In the following section I will present these in further detail.

Reading comprehension and details

These are questions that usually come first of the post-reading tasks. They are basically questions about details from the text, such as "Who is person X?" or "What does person X give person Y after that happens?". These tasks are often also in the shape of quizzes, where the students are to choose between alternatives, which are formed as statements about the text, and tick off the right answer. If they are "Writing" tasks, they ask students to write a summary, either by memory or by using certain keywords. Basically, these tasks can be defined as questions to which answers are available in the text if the students read and understand it correctly.

Genre analysis and genre specifics

These are tasks dealing with elements that would be useful in an analysis of the particular text, such as literary devices like setting, climax and/or symbols, character descriptions, point(s) of view, overall message, rhyming schemes, images/symbolism etc.. They will often ask the students to perform an analysis and referring to the “toolboxes” in the back of the textbook or other similar resources throughout the textbook. In these tasks, students are simply to answer what the setting in the text is or what images they can find, but they are not to explain what effect it may have or otherwise go deeper into the underlying meaning. These are tasks belonging to the next category.

Reflecting on and analyzing the content of the text

These tasks are connected to the genre analysis tasks in the way that they will often ask the students to reflect on what the effect of how certain genre specifics are executed is, such as *why they think* characters do what they do, what attitudes are portrayed and *whether they agree* with these, what cultures and values are portrayed in the text, the overall message or theme(s) of the text, which all open for the students' own interpretation. Any questions about whether they liked the text or not belong here, as well as tasks such as writing a continuation of the story.

Being a character

These tasks ask the students to actively “be” a character, mainly by trying to put themselves in a character's place. Written tasks in this category may ask the students to write a letter from a character to another or writing a personal letter from that character. They require that the students can interpret a character and act and think like that specific character, and not themselves. Tasks in which the students are to act out scenes from the text also belong in this category.

Dealing with the author and narrative choices

These tasks are similar to those of the other categories, but they are directly connected to the author in some way, such as asking what the author means by using that type of language or that rhyme scheme, why has he chosen that title and similar questions. They could also be questions about possible inspiration and biographical elements. In order for it to be a question

about the author, he or she needs to be mentioned in the question. If not, the task will be considered another category that is more fitting.

Sharing experiences

These are tasks in which the students are to reflect on their own experience with something, usually a topic, possible situation or dilemma, and they are often asked to share it with classmates. The tasks are often expressed as follows: “What do you think...” or “Have you ever experienced...”, “you” being the operative word. If they are to give reasons for why they think a character did something, the task belongs to a different category.

These six categories will be used to classify all the relevant post-reading tasks in my material. In chapter 5 and in my discussion in chapter 6 I will present the results from the analyses of the textbooks and their tasks based on the criteria and categories I have presented in this chapter. I will also present the texts that appear in more than one of the textbooks and comment on the differences made in how the text is treated and what tasks are connected to these particular texts, in order to contrast and compare.

3.5 Chapter summary

In this chapter I have presented the method I will apply to this study. I am to analyze four different textbooks for VG1 English, published during the Knowledge Promotion (LK06) by examining their literary texts and tasks, in order to be able to say something about how literature and literary texts are treated in these textbooks. The focus of the analysis will be on the textbook design and how the literary texts are presented in the textbook, and what tasks, pre-reading and post-reading, are connected to these texts. This will be done by counting and categorizing the different tasks to each literary text according to the tasks’ content and to relevant literary theories. This study will unfortunately have a limited external validity due to the fact that only a sample representing about 50% of the population of VG1 English textbooks has been used, but the study will be able to say something about what seems to be the general style and standard of the four VG1 English textbooks I chose as my material. It will also say something about what significant differences and similarities there are in these textbooks, especially with respect to the use of tasks. In the following chapter I will present the material used in this study, namely the four textbooks, and their content.

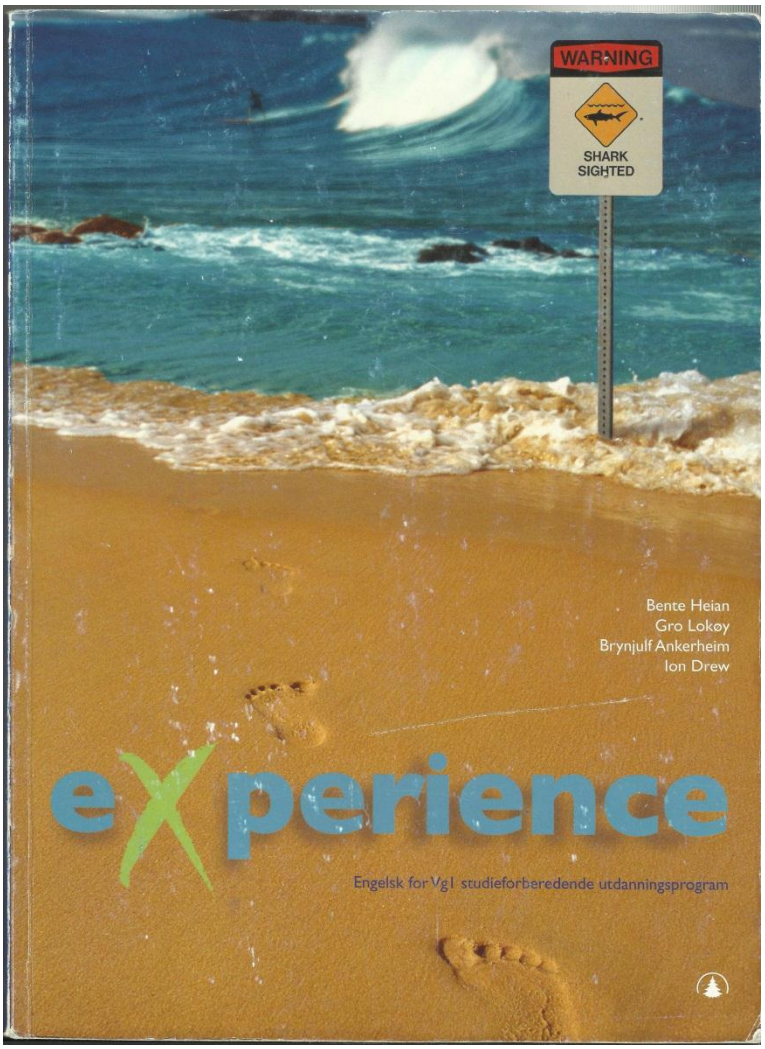
4 The textbooks

In this chapter I present the four textbooks that are analyzed in this study. I will comment on the general composition of the textbooks, their layout and how the chapters are designed, the number and types of literary texts and types of tasks with examples. I will also comment on how the literary texts are presented, as well as how the tasks are distributed. Next, the different types of tasks in each textbook will be presented, and I will also give a short comment on the use of pre-reading tasks. In this chapter, the tasks will not be analyzed according to the categories I have presented above (sections 3.4.1 and 3.4.2); this will follow in the next. I will, however, comment on differences and similarities in layout, types of tasks etc., within the collection of textbooks as a whole, and also use the textbooks' own groups of tasks.

4.1 Choice and presentation of textbooks

The textbooks I have chosen are, as mentioned, all textbooks for the common core subject English in VG1, written for the 2006 Knowledge Promotion Reform. The textbooks of choice are, in alphabetical order, *eXperience – Engelsk for VG1 studieforberedende utdanningsprogram*, published by Gyldendal Norsk Forlag AS in 2006, 1st edition; *Passage – Engelsk VG1 studieforberedende program*, published by Cappelen Damm in 2009, 4th edition; *Stunt – Engelsk for vg1 studieforberedende utdanningsprogram*, published by Det Norske Samlaget in 2009, 1st edition; and *Targets – Engelsk VG1*, published by H. Aschehoug & Co in 2009, 3rd edition.

4.2 *eXperience – Engelsk for VG1 studieforberedende utdanningsprogram*



This textbook was published by Gyldendal Norsk Forlag in 2006 and comprises 346 pages. It is an all-in-one textbook. A teacher's guide, CDs and webpages are also available for the students and the teacher. There are 5 chapters in all plus a section in the very last part of the textbook called “ToolboX”. This presents the competence aims of the subject and provides information and tips about reading strategies and how-to's, such as how to give an oral presentation, how to analyze a film etc.

Each chapter starts with a presentation of the relevant learning objectives, some

loosely based on the competence aims by breaking them up into smaller and more easily comprehensible objectives. There is also a section at the end of the chapter called "I Can...", where the students are to check off boxes depending on whether they can "do" a certain objective partly, quite well or very well. The textbook is generally comprised of literary texts, so-called "fact files" and factual texts and many other written genres such as song lyrics, articles and plays, which are nicely distributed throughout the chapters.

The chapters' names focus on the themes that are represented in them, such as "Personal eXperience", "Social eXperience", "Intercultural eXperience" and "eXperience Art and Literature". These titles represent the topics and themes the students may encounter in that particular chapter, and the literary texts are usually representative of that as well.

In *eXperience*, there are 15 poems, 7 novel excerpts and 9 short stories, 31 literary texts in total, and it has the second highest number of novel excerpts and poems of the four included in this study. There is a large number of very different authors in all its chapters, and it seems that *eXperience* generally features more modern writers, and also writers that are modern novel authors, such as Sophie Kinsella and Mark Haddon, despite not being the textbook with the most texts. There are also other genres that may be of interest to the students, such as song lyrics, food recipes, memoirs, film reviews and interviews. In general, the texts and topics chosen in this textbook along with fitting illustrations makes it seem very modern and appealing to the age group in question, see appendix 1 for a total list of texts.

Most of the literary texts, but not all, have a small section preceding the text presenting the author, which is placed at the very top of the page. This section usually describes the author's background, ethnicity and what themes are typical of their authorship. Biographical information is also added if it is of relevance for the text in question.

Types of tasks

All of the literary texts in *eXperience* have tasks following the text. In some cases, "fact files" which present the historical background and some helpful information about the background of the story in the text, precede the tasks. Those which are relevant may have the headlines "Reading", "Speaking" and/or "Writing", but usually a text will only have one or two types of tasks. After some of the texts there is also a section called "Choices", where students are

allowed to choose what task they would like to do. “Choices” is comprised of three different tasks, A, B and C, which are equal with regard to difficulty, but some may appeal more to some students than others. The three choices are usually different tasks within the same area, such as “Writing”, with for example A asking the students to write a continuation of the story, B asking them to write a diary entry and C asking them to write a short summary; but can sometimes be three different tasks, one dealing with writing, the second with speaking and the last with reading.

“Reading” tasks are mostly based on reading comprehension, called “Reading for understanding” or “Close reading”, asking questions about details, “what happened..” or “describe...”, but the last questions in this particular section of tasks are often about reflecting over what happens in the story, such as “why do you think that happened...”, or about genre specifics such as analyzing the characters, plot etc. “Speaking” tasks are about the text's setting, how the text is built up, but also about discussing the text's theme, or doing something creative with the text. Some of the tasks look very much like the tasks in “Reading”, but they are supposed to be answered orally instead. “Writing” tasks usually ask the students to rewrite parts of the texts, make up new endings, or write a personal text pretending they are one of the characters from the text.

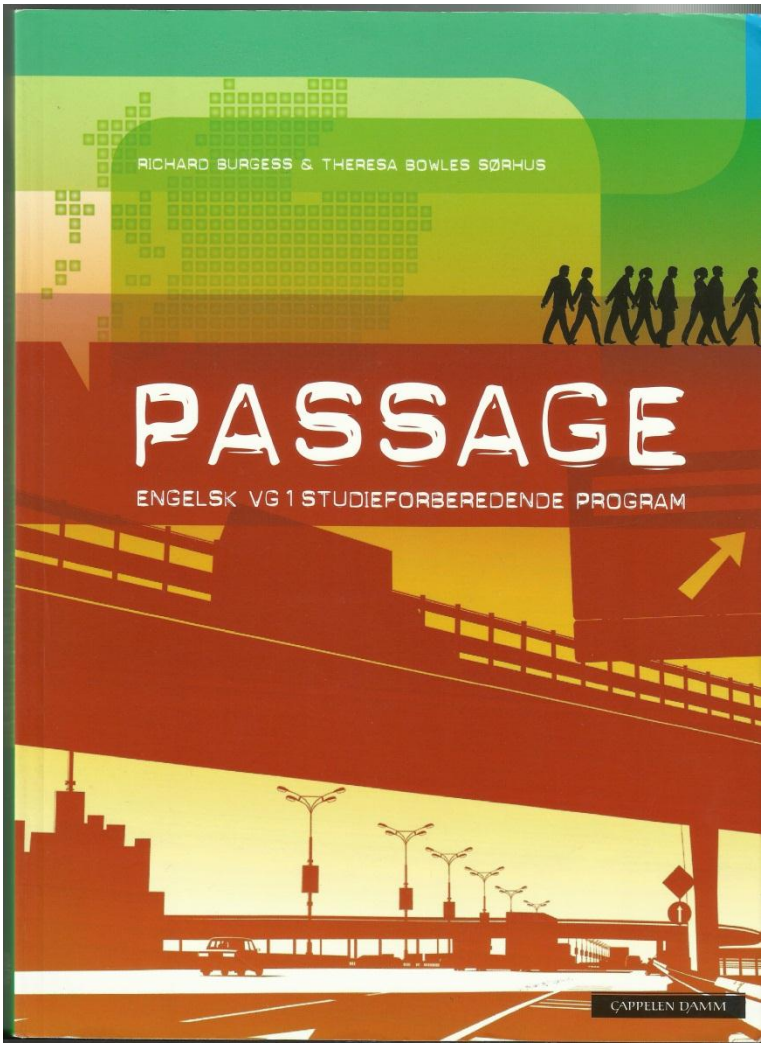
Pre-reading tasks

These tasks come under the heading “Pre-Reading”, and about half the literary texts have these pre-reading tasks, following directly after the presentation of the author. They mostly ask the students to relate to the theme of the story, with questions such as “how do you feel about...” or “have you ever experienced...”, or ask them to reflect on a certain topic that relates to the theme. Other texts' “Pre-Reading” are more fact-based, for instance “what do you know about South Africa?”, or reflect upon differences in culture and/or the era the story takes place in. Often case the pre-reading tasks are preceded by a “fact file” as well.

With a large number of different tasks and texts, as well as a fresh approach to what the structure of a textbook should be like, this textbook may appeal to the students in that it deals more with the actual themes of the literary and factual texts which are generally about personal experiences more than hard facts. On the other hand, students who do appreciate the more factual texts may feel that this textbook is not serious enough and may be hesitant to

draw facts from the literary texts as might be intended by the textbook authors.

4.3 *Passage – Engelsk VG1 studieforberedende program*



This textbook was published by Cappelen Damm in 2009 and comprises 334 pages. The complete textbook set consists of the textbook, CDs specified to be only for the teacher, and webpages available both for the teacher and the students. There are 6 chapters plus a glossary of grammatical terms and a "toolbox" which consists of genre definitions and how-to's. The chapters are presented with a title page, but no competence aims are presented here or anywhere else in the textbook, and there is no schema at the end of each chapter where students can evaluate themselves as was the case with *eXperience*. The textbook includes a

number of factual texts, and a quite large number of listening comprehension tasks and other genres such as songs and autobiographies. Most chapters have a part at the end of the chapter called “Improve your writing”, which explains how one should use sources, how you can link your text etc., some of which are also based obliquely on competence aims.

The literary texts are distributed throughout the textbook in two ways – some are included in the general part of the chapters, others are included in a section at the end of the chapters called “Literary Interlude”, which is particularly dedicated to “classic” texts or authors. Each chapter has headlines that may give associations to typical themes or topics that could be illustrated in the literary texts, but there are not really any explanations to each chapter, for example stating what the chapter is about, and the choice of literary texts seems to be a bit arbitrary at times. The only exception is the chapter called “We Were Here First“, which deals with aboriginal peoples represented by authors who are Aboriginals and Native Americans.

In *Passage*, there are 10 short stories, 6 poems and 2 novel excerpts, so a total of 18 literary texts. This is the textbook with the smallest number of literary texts in the sample, but when looking at the list of contents, *Passage* has included a lot of other written genres, such as speeches, songs, film reviews and newspaper articles, which combined with factual texts comprises most of the textbook’s “storyline”. *Passage* also has a different approach to literature in that they have separate sections called “Literary Interlude”, which deals specifically with literature for literature’s sake. The poems that are not included in this section are not given as much attention as those who are, to exemplify the purpose of this section, see appendix 2 for a total list of texts.

Although *Passage* is the textbook with the least literary texts, the only genre that has a considerable number of texts is the short story, however there are still only 10 of them, although the texts that are included are very diverse, based on both theme and ethnicity of the author. There are some more classical texts from the more famous authors like Shakespeare and Dickens, and some texts that are more “exotic” written by what for the students may be unfamiliar authors, such as Witi Ihimaera and Tayed Salih.

Most of the authors are not introduced before the literary texts in this textbook, neither

in the general part of the chapter nor in the “Literary Interlude” - although some are mentioned briefly in the plot summary or pre-reading tasks preceding a text. They do not, like in the other textbooks, get their own section, but are placed together with pre-reading tasks, and are thereby not given that much focus.

Types of tasks

All of the literary texts in *Passage* have both pre-reading tasks and tasks following the texts, some texts will have more and some less, depending on the text in question. Tasks following the texts, and which are relevant, have the headlines “Understanding the text/story”, “Talk about it” and “Write about it/Writing”. For some texts, “Just for fun” – for example acting a story out, “Research” and “Expressing opinions” are also possible tasks.

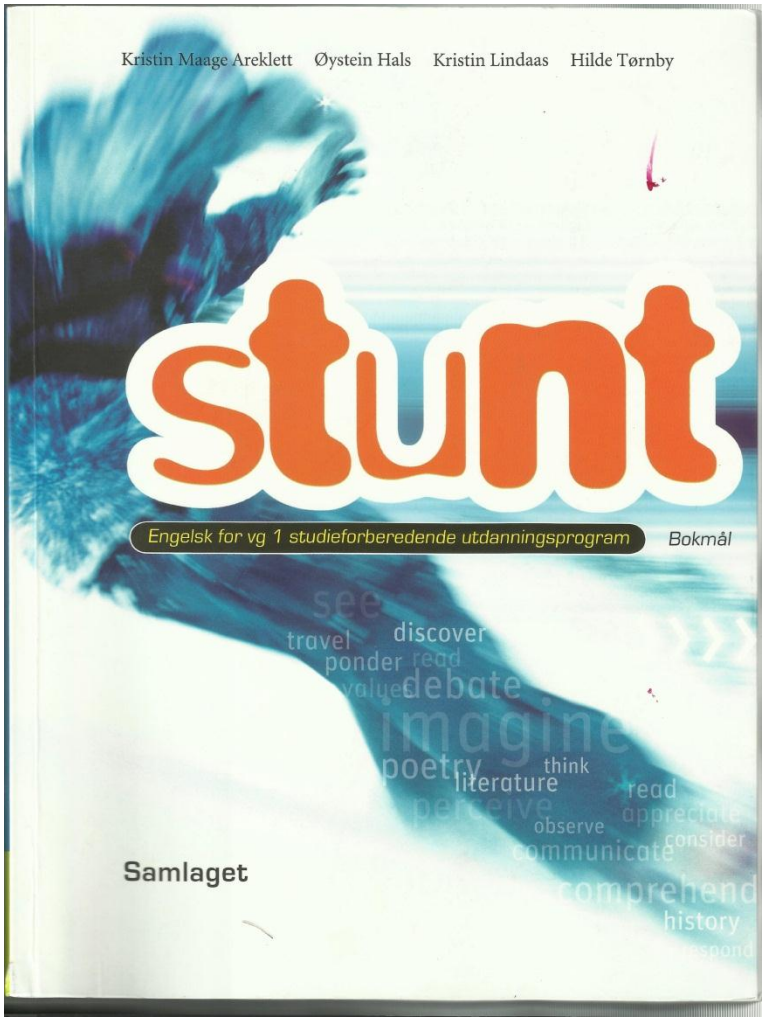
“Understanding the text/story” are usually tasks or questions about details or correcting false statements, but can also be more creative activities like doing an interview and making wall posters. “Talk about it” usually involves discussing certain parts of the story, narrative choices made by the author or describing characters, most tasks are based on discussing with fellow classmates. “Write about it” seems to be mostly about continuing the story or choosing a theme from the story and then write a text of your own about it, usually in any genre the student prefers, although essays seems to occur quite often too.

Pre-reading tasks

The pre-reading tasks are called *“*Points of departure”. Some of these tasks also provide an extensive introduction to the historical background of the poem along with the author biography or short summary of the text instead, information that may be useful to know in order to understand the story. These often, but not always, have a couple of questions at the end, asking the students to discuss the overall theme or one of the themes of the story with classmates. These tasks are often about putting themselves in a situation like the one they will find in the text, in order to identify themselves better with the main character or other characters; the questions are often “what would you have done if...” and similar questions. These tasks may also ask the students to define concepts or terms that are significant for the text. Compared to *eXperience*, *Passage* has a different focus on literary texts as it has its own section called “Literary Interlude”, devoted to more classical and perhaps familiar texts,

whereas the rest of the textbook is generally comprised of more factual texts or texts of other genres. Nonetheless, the selection of writers is diverse and interesting, even if they are not presented with the texts themselves.

4.4 Stunt – Engelsk for vg1 studieforberedende utdanningsprogram



This textbook was published by Det Norske Samlaget in 2009 and has 358 pages. The complete set also comes with CDs and webpages both for the teacher and the students. There are five chapters, the very last chapter dealing only with grammar and writing. Each chapter is subdivided into topics or themes, which are illustrated with literary and factual texts, and they are introduced with "Areas of Focus", which gives the students an idea of what the chapter is

about, both thematically and what tasks they should anticipate, most of the areas are not directly based on competence aims. Most chapters also have a chart at the very end where the students are to evaluate their learning of these topics, and check off whether they know a few things about something, they are familiar with and can describe it, or if they understand and can explain using correct terms.

In the table of contents, all texts are marked with a hand symbol, where one finger showing means that the text is considered to be easy, two fingers means medium, and three fingers means that the text is considered to be difficult. The list of contents also shows what texts belong to which theme in that chapter, like “Values” or “Global Issues”, and also what themes are covered in the particular texts, which makes it easier for the students to interpret a theme of the text, and clarifies the textbook's intention: to use literature as a way of learning more about a topic.

Of the literary texts, there are 15 easy texts, 18 texts of medium difficulty and 13 difficult texts that are relevant. I would however like to mention that some of the poems mentioned in the list of contents are grouped together. All in all there are 15 short stories, 23 poems and 8 novel excerpts – a total of 46 literary texts, with a relatively good spread of difficulty. They are also distributed very nicely throughout the textbook by not having all literary texts follow each other. Instead, they are blended in with factual texts and images, making them a natural part of the layout of the textbook and the “storyline” – see appendix 3 for a total list of texts.

By classifying the text into levels of difficulty, this textbook stands out in terms of accommodating different types of readers. The classification seems to be based on vocabulary used in the text, the clarity of the text's theme or topic and familiarity with the author, and also, the easier texts are typically shorter in length than the more difficult texts.

Stunt has the largest number of literary text of all the textbooks, with a good balance between the different genres as well. The selection of texts and authors is also diverse, spanning from Shakespeare to Nick Hornby, and a large variety of more classic authors to more modern day writers. There seems to be a particular focus on poetry, as there are more poems than short stories and novel excerpts, and *Stunt* is also by far the textbook with the most poems, almost twice as many as *Targets*, which will be presented next, and four times as

many as *Passage*.

The textbook also makes a point of always presenting the author ahead of the text. This is done by putting a small text box next to the text in which the author is presented, usually with their birth year, ethnicity and other novels, poems or short stories they have written, what is typical of that writer and what literary period he/she is from is also often mentioned, especially if it is of particular interest or relevance for the text.

Types of tasks

Most of the texts in *Stunt* have tasks related to them, and often they are two-parted: One type is called "Viewpoints", the other is called "Checkpoints". Confusingly enough, they are usually marked with a small drawing of either an eye ("Viewpoints") or a gun sight ("Checkpoints"), but these are used interchangeably, whether this is done on purpose cannot be determined. In a few of the texts, there are "Checkpoint" questions within the text itself (mid-reading tasks), but I will not go further into these. In some cases there is also a list of tasks under the heading "Creative Stunts!", which are mostly tasks in writing.

"Viewpoints" tasks challenge the students to relate to the text and express their own opinions. They may also ask for interpretations of the title, why a character do what they do, how the students would characterize a character or a happening, or what they would do if they were in a certain character's position. "Checkpoints" tasks ask about text comprehension, simple questions about what happens throughout the story. They may also be about commenting on certain textual features, or even specific details about the text, for example descriptions. "Creative Stunts!" tasks are called creative stunts as they do challenge the students to be creative – they will most often ask the students to write personal texts, for example letters to other characters or personal notes like diary entries, or create a dialogue or a role play between characters.

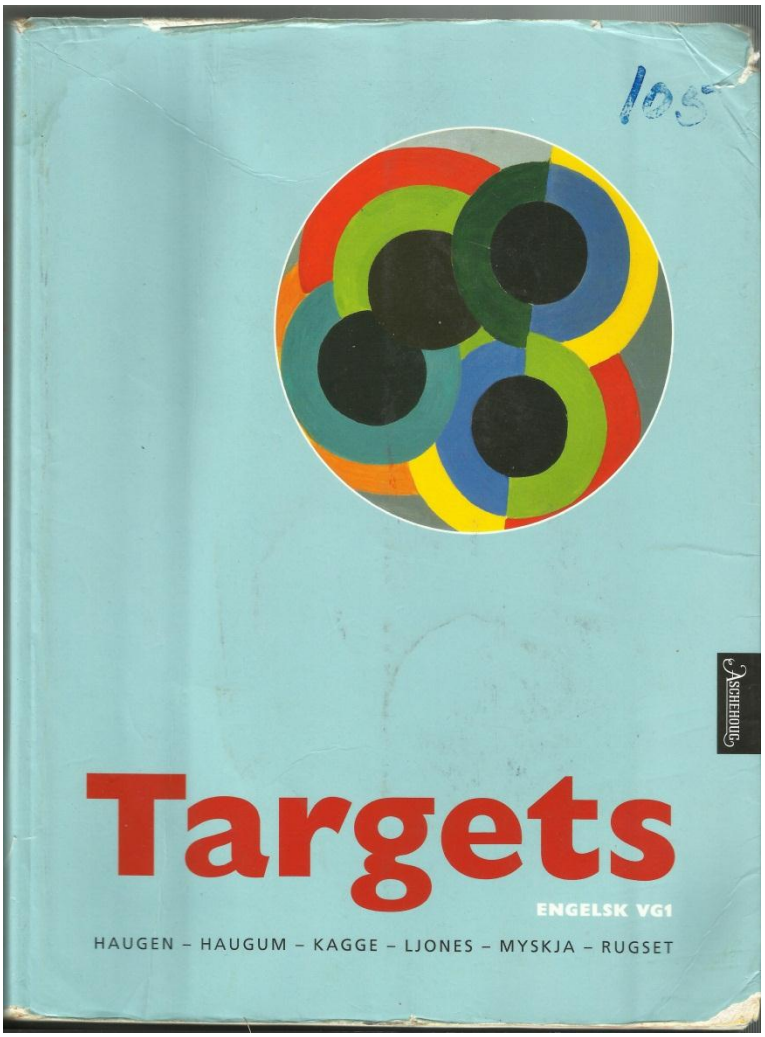
Pre-reading tasks

The pre-reading tasks in *Stunt* are called "Starting point", and most of the literary texts have them, at least to some extent as some texts have more than one pre-reading task, and some, mostly poems, do not have any pre-reading tasks at all. The tasks precede the section with

author information and they are placed at the very top of the page. Usually, the tasks are about associating with the general theme of the text that is to be read, about putting yourself in the narrator's place and often discussing this with classmates. The students may also be asked whether they agree or disagree with a statement, or to continue a story after reading the first sentence, based on what they think will happen, for then to read the actual story. Tasks asking if an international culture or cultural elements influences us as Norwegians and how, also occur. Most of the tasks are however more or less obliquely connected to the theme or what happens in the text, such as using some of the words from the texts to make your own story, or writing down which qualities that are important to them in a significant other, if the text is about love. Others put the students in the same situation as the protagonist is in in the story, for example a difficult relationship with parents, and ask the students to reflect on what they themselves would have done in such a situation.

Stunt makes a point out of specifying the difficulty, which can make it easier for students who struggle with reading to still have a positive experience with literature – the creative stunts can also spark an interest in some students. It also clarifies the texts' theme in the list of contents, giving students a hint about what they could look for when attempting to analyze them. The large number of poems also makes *Stunt* stand out, although in the students' case this may not be seen as a positive trait.

4.5 *Targets – Engelsk VG1*



Targets was published by Aschehoug in 2009 and comprises 315 pages. This textbook also comes with CDs and has webpages for the students and the teacher. There are 7 chapters in total, the last one dealing only with grammar, and it has a reference section telling the students how to write different types of texts. This chapter also contains information about learning-, reading- and writing strategies. Each of the other chapters start with a presentation of the main aims, based on the main areas as presented in LK06 – language learning, communication and culture, society and literature. At the end of the chapters, there is an assessment chart where the students tick off boxes on whether they can "do" the aims presented at the beginning of the chapter. On a personal note, this is the textbook I have actually experienced being used in English classes in my practice period and as a working teacher.

The literary texts are presented like any other texts in the list of contents, which also makes it clear what kind of text it is, whether it is a short story, poem etc. All the texts are available on the CD which comes with the textbook. The literary texts are distributed quite nicely throughout the textbook,, blending in with the factual texts. There are in total 18 short stories, 12 poems and 4 novel excerpts, in total 34 literary texts. The genres are not as evenly distributed as in the other textbooks, as there are three times as many poems as novel excerpts, and more than four times as many short stories.

In fact, *Targets* has by far the largest number of short stories, compared to the other textbooks, and it also has the second largest total of literary texts. The distribution of texts based on theme is done differently here, for example is the first chapter called "Around The World", and features authors from Africa and Asia, along with British writers like the Irish Liam O'Flaherty. The next two of the chapters called "British Culture and Society" and "American Culture and Society" respectively, and it is only natural that these two chapters present British and American authors and writers. Also, in the chapter called "First Nations", there are several aboriginal writers, both from Australia, New Zealand and America. The second last chapter, "The English Language", deals with more traditional writers such as Shakespeare and Dickens. Apparently, *Targets* chooses to emphasize the authors' ethnicities, and to show that they have chosen a very diverse collection of literature – see appendix 4 for a total list of texts.

Each of the literary texts starts with a presentation of the author, their ethnicity, what else they have written and what themes or topics may be typical for that author. Some also have a small biography, especially authors that may be expected to have written a somewhat autobiographical piece. Biographical information is also added if it is of relevance for the theme of the story.

Types of tasks

Most of the literary texts in *Targets* have several tasks related to them, the specific number is often related to how long the relevant text is, and the task categories are numeral, however not all of the different types of tasks are relevant to this paper. There are small headings for each type of tasks, such as "Reading", "Speaking" and "Writing", which are also the three task

types I will be using.

"Reading", which usually have tasks like "Reading for detail/information" or "Reading literature/poetry", which both are tasks about reading comprehension and details from the text, the latter can also be tasks asking about genre specifics. There are also some texts that have another type of tasks under "Reading", which is "Understanding literature/poetry", which are tasks in which the students are to interpret what happens, why the characters do what they do etc. "Speaking" tasks can be "Understanding/discussing Literature", which are about finding symbols, descriptions, rhyme schemes or talking about what they've learned from reading the text, "Expressing opinions" are the most frequent speaking tasks and asks the students to discuss why the characters do what they do, what thy themselves would have done if they were one of the characters, and other similar tasks. "Act it out " or "Role play" are also speaking tasks, and asks the students to simply act out a part from the text, or they make up a continuation of the story or add a scene and then act that scene out. "Writing" tasks are usually about writing a personal text, imagining that you are one of the characters, writing a story based on the original text, or simply a summary.

Pre-reading tasks

The pre-reading tasks are called "Before You Read", and usually appear next to the text title**.** This placement, instead of putting the tasks before the text, might mean that these are not to be seen as highly necessary to do. The pre-reading tasks are often about discussing the theme, questions like "have you ever experienced...", or "imagine that you experienced that, what would you have done?", which is supposed to have the students put themselves in the situations that are going to be portrayed in the text, and in order for them to better understand the text. They may also ask the students' opinions on the title, and what they think the story is about based on their immidiate associations. Some also ask what the student associate with or know about the specific culture/country or historic period portrayed in the text, such as the apartheid system, in some cases the students are given this information beforehand as well.. Not all of the texts have such pre-reading tasks, and there is no connection between the pre-reading tasks and the number of tasks following the texts.

As I pointed out further up, *Targets* is the one textbook I have actually experienced being used, the reason for this might be *Targets'* large collection of texts and tasks to go with

them -basically the textbook offers many activities and many themes and topics that may be discussed or worked with in class.

4.6 Comparison of the textbooks

At first glance the four textbooks all seemed fairly similar, at least in how they presented literature and the general layout of the textbook. However, after having examined them more thoroughly, certain similarities and differences have become more salient. In this section I will present a few issues that are worthy of discussing, and what effects these editorial choices may have on the presentation of literary texts.

Layout chapters / presentation of texts

Among the main differences between the textbooks are the general layout: how the chapters are organized and what elements are added to them, for example a focus on competence aims. There is no one thing that they all have in common, but two of them have a so-called "toolbox" in which the students can look up different strategies for reading and writing, how to write a specific type of text etc., and they have evaluation schemes at the end of each chapter where the students are to evaluate their learning, usually by ticking off boxes, choosing between how well they have learned something on a scale from knowing something about it to knowing it well. A section like this may be helpful to students in order to have them really reflect on what they have learned, how they have learned it and how well they feel that they know something. It may also help them develop learning strategies if they are made aware of what they should have learned and how they could have gone about learning it.

How the textbooks relate themselves and their content to competence aims or main areas of the actual subject differs extensively from textbook to textbook. While *eXperience* has learning objectives before each chapter that are loosely based on competence aims, *Passage* hardly mentions them at all. Furthermore, *Stunt* and *Targets* do have areas of focus or main aims that are based on the main areas of the subject, but not necessarily specific competence aims. This also manifests itself in the list of content and the chapters' front pages; *Targets*' chapters start by presenting the main aims for the specific chapter, based on the main areas, while *Passage* has front pages for its chapters which do not really give the students any clues on what it is about. In comparison, *Stunt's* list of contents states clearly what each text is

about regarding themes and/or issues, and *eXperience's* chapters get their names from the themes that are represented in them and not just the historical and geographical subjects, such as “Personal eXperience” and “Intercultural eXperience”.

How the literary texts are presented also differs from textbook to textbook, in most of them the literary texts are natural parts of the textbook's general layout and are distributed amongst other genres without being specifically called attention to, except in *Passage* in which some of the texts are part of its “Literary Interlude”. *Stunt* also makes a point out of their literary texts by differentiating them in its list of contents, which could make it easier for the teacher to plan what texts to teach and how to teach them, and *Targets* have all the literary texts available on CD, for those students (and teachers) who prefer to listen rather than to read.

Number of texts

The number of texts differs considerably from each textbook, from 18 in one to 46 in another (see appendices 1-4). However, this does not mean that one textbook is less focused on literature than another, but simply that it may have a more varied selection of text genres than the other, as in this paper only a few genres are considered to be relevant for the study. The textbook with only 18 texts, which is *Passage*, makes up for it by having the section “Literary Interlude”, which ensures a certain focus on literature after all. In comparison, the textbooks with more literary texts distributed amongst factual texts might make the literary texts comparable to the factual texts and their outstanding features may be overlooked because they appear more arbitrarily in these textbooks. One might also wonder whether there will actually be time throughout a school year to deal with all the 46 texts in *Stunt*, and whether having a narrower focus might be more fruitful. On the other hand, if literary texts dominate the general array of texts, it might be a deliberate choice by the textbook authors. This way, the students and the teacher may use the literary texts as well as the factual texts to learn about history, social issues or other topics that the textbook deals with, and not see them only as literary texts which should be analyzed according to genre specifics and so on. This issue will be further discussed when commenting on the presentation of texts.

Types of texts

In this study I have only chosen to look at three main types of literary genres represented in these textbooks, namely the poem, the short story and the novel excerpt. These are also the main literary genres that are used in textbooks when it comes to literary texts.

Novel excerpts will usually be added in textbooks to make the students want to find out what happened next or what happened prior to the excerpt they are presented with. The novel excerpts in these textbooks often have pre-reading tasks or tasks asking them to imagine exactly this, and will more often that with other genres focus on the information given in the excerpt and how they can find out more; hopefully some of the students will want to read the whole novel, either individually or in class. The novel excerpts presented in these textbooks are all from different literary periods, and there are no obvious similarities between them; it does not seem like they have been added to give an overview of a literary work either, which may also have been the case, so that the students are familiar with the work but have not read it or are not encouraged to read it in its entirety. Most of the excerpts in these textbooks are relatively contemporary and would perhaps appeal more to students than excerpts from older novels, and which could spark that literary interest in some of them.

Poems appear quite often in all the textbooks, whether they are credited as such or used simply as a quotation or illustration of a chapter or a picture. Poems are often considered "harder" than short stories and other literary genres because they are not direct, using certain words and phrases does not necessarily mean that the denoted meanings of these are implied- The poem may for example be about one man, the actual meaning might actually be mankind as a whole, or even more difficult metaphors and similes. For most students this may mean a lot of guesswork and not understanding very much of what the poem is supposed to mean or what the message really is, instead they are focused on the hardship of actually interpreting the work. Furthermore, the poems in these textbooks are quite often from another literary period, such as the Victorian or even Jacobean period, which may make them harder to understand simply because of the vocabulary that is being used, not to mention the themes and topics of the poems that were typical of that period, but which are not that easy to identify. On that note, both *Targets* and *eXperience* have many modern poets and very few of the more classic poets one would expect, which is refreshing and could make poetry more appreciated by the students.

Short stories are, in Edgar Allan Poe's opinion, something that should be read in one sitting (May 1994), which should make them highly suitable for school textbooks. Although they are not the genre with the most texts in each textbook, they are very diverse and spans from Poe himself, Ernest Hemingway and Oscar Wilde to Roald Dahl, Ben Okri and Nadine Gordimer. As short stories are allowed to stretch over several pages, comprising a story with a beginning and an end, they give the students the possibility of reliving it, whether it is completely fictional or if there are elements of truth and reality in it. It is probably the genre which asks for the most opinions about the choices made by and identification with the characters, as the students are able to see both actions and consequences, unlike the novel excerpts which may cut the storyline short. Whether short stories are seemingly used for factual or literary reasons, or perhaps both, will be discussed in the next chapter, as the tasks connected to the short stories will most likely give some hints about that.

The author

I have also chosen to say something in each of the presentations of the textbooks about how the author is presented, as this is something that may or may not color the students' reading or interpretation of a text, as there may be biographical elements in the text, hints about themes and the historical period in which the text was written. By leaving this out, students are left to develop their own interpretation of who the writer is, what he or she brings to the text and what the text is about. However, knowing something about the background of the text beforehand may also be helpful for the students' interpretation and understanding as it does provide them with a point of view so that they will not get lost in trying to interpret the text.

Tasks

All four textbooks have many similarities when it comes to the types of tasks they offer; reading, speaking and writing tasks can be found in all of them, and some of them also have more creative tasks in common such as acting some of the text out, or listening tasks with texts available on the CDs. The main differences between the textbooks generally lie in how they have chosen to incorporate the text or textual elements into tasks that does not really have anything to do with the text, but simply to point out or exemplify something, such as grammar tasks, or telling the students to search for a person or a happening mentioned in the text on the Internet for further work with the more factual issue or subject of the text. Whereas these tasks may make it easier to understand the text, it would perhaps be more fruitful to

have them used as pre-reading tasks rather than doing them after the text has most likely already been discussed, as most pre-reading tasks in the textbooks intend to give the students some kind of grounding. Types of tasks will be analyzed more thoroughly in the next chapter where they will be categorized based on what they ask the students to do with the text.

4.7 Summary

In this chapter I have presented my material in form of the four textbooks I have been looking at, *eXperience*, *Passage*, *Stunt* and *Targets*. I have given a presentation of each of them, and given an account of their general layout, their texts and their tasks. I have also looked at them as a whole, pointing at significant differences and similarities between them, of which there are many. Some of these are obviously more important than others, and some can make two textbooks entirely different from each other. My main focus has been to look at the factors which have significance for how the literary texts are treated in each of them. In the next chapter I will take a closer look at the tasks connected to literary texts, in order to see what the textbooks' actual focus and intention with literary texts is. The tasks will be categorized and related to the relevant theory.

5 Results

In this chapter I will present the results from the analysis of the textbooks, as well as an analysis of the use of tasks in these textbooks. In the last section of this chapter I will also take a closer look at some of the texts that are present in more than one textbook and show the differences and similarities of how the texts are used in each textbook. This chapter will refer to both chapter 3 – *Methodology*, by using the methodical approaches as presented there, and chapter 4 – *The Textbooks*, in which the textbooks and their content are presented more in detail, and there may therefore be some repetition of the material from these chapters. The first section of this chapter will present the results from the textbook analysis along with some editorial aspects of these textbooks that are interesting to this study. The next section will present the results from the analysis of the tasks in the textbooks. Finally, the texts that can be found in more than one textbook and what differences there are in how they are treated will be presented and analyzed according to their presentation and what tasks are connected to them. I will end this chapter by giving a short summary of the findings.

5.1 Textbook design

From the presentation of the textbooks in chapter 4, we can see that there are some general similarities in how they are designed, but also large differences in their layout and in the focus on literature they seem to have. As the textbooks themselves were chosen as sources for the literary texts and tasks, I have not gone into theories around textbook design. However, the way a textbook is designed may alter the way the specific texts and tasks are perceived and actually used by students and teachers. There are therefore certain aspects about them that are of interest in this analysis.

First, I will present a table which provides an overview of all the texts in the textbooks, including literary texts, meaning that it also includes those texts that I have chosen not to use in this study, such as factual texts and texts in other genres. In this way, what can be seen from this table is the percentage of literary texts compared to the rest of the textbooks' content.

Table 5.1 Number of different text types in each textbook

TEXTS / BOOKS	STUNT	PASSAGE	EXPERIENCE	TARGETS
Literary texts	46	18	31	34
Factual texts	38	19	16	22
Other texts	29	25	22	20
Total no. Texts	113	62	69	76
Literary texts make up what approx. percentage:	**41%**	**29%**	**45%**	**45%**

As can be seen, there are only small differences with regard to what types of texts each textbook chooses to use, indeed, the distribution is quite similar in all the textbooks, as is illustrated here. *Passage* is the textbook in which the percentage of literary texts is the lowest, and it is also the textbook in which there are fewer literary texts (18 texts) than factual texts (19 texts) and "other" texts (25 texts), compared to in *eXperience* and *Targets.* In these textbooks, the literary texts almost make up half of all the texts in the textbook. Nevertheless, *Passage* does have a more balanced distribution of different texts, so there is not necessarily a smaller focus on literature in this textbook, as many of the texts categorized as "other texts" will also have some literary features. Furthermore, *Passage* was the only textbook that clarified possible background information in the pre-reading task section before the text (see schema theory in chapter 2, section 2.7.1). This means that literary texts in this textbook are not necessarily used as factual texts, as the textbook provides the students with the specific factual information they need before they read. Except for *Passage*, none of the textbooks have more factual texts than literary texts. This could mean that the literary texts are used as factual texts in order to learn about e.g. culture, because the textbooks have such a small number of factual texts. However, it may also mean that there is in fact a large focus on literary texts as exactly that, literary texts, and they will be worked with as such. This may depend on what the textbook writers intend for the texts they have chosen and why they have

chosen the particular texts. It also depends on what stance the textbook writers intend the students to take while working with these texts, and what the students are to develop, be it factual knowledge, further developed reading skills, literary competence or something else. This will hopefully be evident in the analysis and discussion of tasks, which I will come back to in another part of this chapter.

Text presentation

Most of the literary texts are evenly spread throughout all of the textbooks with the rest of their content, and there is no specific section in the textbooks which deals solely with literature, except in *Passage* which has a particular section in each chapter called "Literary Interlude" where one or two texts are given specific attention. This section of the textbook is particularly dedicated to "classic" texts or authors, and will often comprise more information about the author, the literary period of the text, and so on. Other editorial choices that separates these textbooks is the manner of which they divide the textbook into chapters, what these chapters are called or what their general theme is, and thereby what texts are in these chapters.

The chapters' names in *eXperience* are based on the themes that are represented in them, such as "Personal eXperience", "Social eXperience", and *Stunt* sorts texts by which theme in a particular chapter they belong to, like "Values", "Individuality" or "Global Issues", despite having somewhat unclear names for its chapters, such as "No Man is an Island" and "The Queen's English". In *Targets*, the chapters are named after the more general thematic areas of the subject of English, for example "Around The World", "British Culture and Society" and "American Culture and Society", and in *Passage*, each chapter has headlines that may give associations to typical themes or topics that could be illustrated in the literary texts, such as "The Power and the Glory", "On the Move" and "We Were Here First".

From this it seems like the focus on literary texts in each textbook is in fact slightly different, although the layout and distribution of texts may seem similar. In the first textbooks, *eXperience* and *Stunt*, there is a focus on what the literary text is about on a more subjective, maybe even emotional level, based on the chapter names and how they distribute and present the literary texts. The last two textbooks, *Passage* and *Targets*, by the looks of their chapters and distribution of literary texts, seem to focus more on the factual content in

their chapters and thereby what kind of factual knowledge the students can draw from the literary texts.

Presenting the author

When presenting the material in chapter 4, I made a point of saying something about the author, and how he or she is presented in each of the textbooks with the text(s) they have written. This also differs from textbook to textbook; although all of the textbooks do present an author at one time or another, not all of them do it with all of the authors. If presented, the author is usually presented with their birth year, ethnicity, the literary period they belong to, typical themes in their texts, and what they have written before. In *eXperience*, most of the authors are presented with their text, and have a section preceding the text, usually placed at the top of the page. *Stunt* and *Targets* always present the author before the text, with a more or less extensive biography and bibliography, and what themes the author in question is known for. In *Stunt*, this section is placed next to the text; in *Targets*, it is placed at the top of the page, which might make it easier to overlook it in *Stunt* than in *Targets*, where it is clearly intended to be read before the text. However, in *Passage*, most of the authors are not introduced before the text, neither in the general part of the chapter nor in the "Literary Interlude". Some authors are mentioned in the plot summary preceding a text, if there is one, or along with the pre-reading exercises.

From this we can see that there are some significant differences in how the role of the author is treated, in fact all of the textbooks treat this particular aspect differently. If we see this in relation to the number of texts in each textbook, it seems strange that *Passage* with its "Literary Interlude" does not mention most of the authors of its literary texts at all, not even in this particular section of the textbook. *Targets* always presents the author ahead of the text, which is important to do if they do in fact use the authors as a way of distributing the literary texts, based on the ethnicity of the author, as suggested in the previous section. It would be interesting to find out why some authors are given attention and some are not, but I will not go into that in this study.

Background material

What is meant by background material is whether there is a specific section preceding the text in which the students can get some information about the topic/theme of the text, such as

historical background etc. Only *Passage* makes a point in adding a section called "Points of departure" to some of the texts in which students are provided with background information, as well as pre-reading tasks in some cases. In the other textbooks, background information is given through other types of texts, such as factual texts or other types of texts, or is non-existent. As displayed in table 5.1 further up, there is quite a similar percentage of literary texts in all of the textbooks, overall there are on average 1.4 literary texts to each factual text, which should ensure that some information in the factual texts could be used to interpret and understand the literary texts as well and provide a context for the literary text. The texts categorized as "other texts" are usually used as illustrations of a certain topic; however, there are some more factual genres in this category as well, such as interviews and articles, which could also help to illustrate a literary text. It would probably be helpful if some of the more difficult texts, those who deal with topics that the students have little or no knowledge about, did have a section devoted to relevant background information before the text, in order to aid the students in their further reading.

As said at the beginning of this chapter, how a textbook is designed may alter the way the specific texts and tasks are perceived. Through the analysis of the textbooks and their layout I have unraveled a few differences, some of which are quite significant as they make the textbook in question differ considerably from the others. For example, what the effect of presenting the author in so many different ways could be is hard to say, as there is no clear reasoning within the textbooks themselves, and whether there is a purpose behind that kind of editorial choice would be very interesting to find out. Nevertheless, I will return to some of the aspects presented here in the next chapter, but will now continue on to the next section in which I will have a closer look at the use of tasks.

5.2 The use of tasks

As noted in chapter 4, the types of tasks relevant for this study in each textbook are generally similar from textbook to textbook; most of them have tasks for writing, speaking, reading and understanding, amongst a few others, which may serve different goals, and which goals may not be literature-related at all. The kinds of tasks that can be found in each of these groups, speaking, writing, etc., and how many there are, differ from textbook to textbook. The textbooks do not have the same amount of tasks to each text, nor do they usually have the same number of tasks within each of my categories to each text

In this section I will present the results from the analysis and comparison of tasks in each textbook, starting with pre-reading tasks. Following the pre-reading tasks is post-reading tasks. Finally, I will present the texts that are present in more than one textbook.

5.2.1 Pre-reading tasks

On the whole, the pre-reading tasks could be found in all of the textbooks, but were not necessarily equally represented in each of them, as the table below will show. In the far left column I have put the different categories of pre-reading tasks as presented in chapter 3, section 3.4.1. Each of the following columns represents the textbooks, with the number of literary texts in each textbook below their title. The bottom row sums up the number of pre-reading tasks within all categories in each of the textbooks.

Table 5.2 Frequency and distribution of pre-reading tasks in the textbooks

CATEGORY/ FREQUENCY	STUNT (46 texts)	PASSAGE (18 texts)	EXPERIENCE (31 texts)	TARGETS (34 texts)	Total
Associations to title and content prediction	5	1	2	5	13
Reflecting on experiences	9	4	5	5	23
General reflections and opinions on a topic	6	2	2	6	16
The text, genre specifics, its background and content	3	2	0	3	8
Questions regarding the subject of English in general	2	0	2	2	6
Being or describing a character	1	1	1	0	3
TOTAL	**26 tasks**	**10 tasks**	**12 tasks**	**21 tasks**	

As displayed in this table, the pre-reading task category that occurs most often in all of the textbooks combined is “Reflecting on experiences”. In *Targets*, however, the category “General reflections and opinions on a topic” occurs more often. “Being or describing a

character" is the category which occurs least often, which is probably because it is more of a post-reading task, as well as "Questions regarding the subject of English in general", as this is a category of tasks which could easily be omitted due to the fact that these tasks are not connected to the text. We can also see that *Stunt* and *Targets* are the most similar textbooks with regard to the types of pre-reading tasks they have, and the frequency of these. If we compare the number of tasks in this table with the number of literary texts in each textbook, we can see that about 50% of the texts in each textbook have one or more pre-reading tasks; in *Stunt*, *Passage*, and *eXperience*, it is most likely that a pre-reading task is within the category "Reflecting on experiences". How these categories of tasks may influence the reading of the text these pre-reading tasks are connected to, will be discussed in the next chapter, and in the following section I will present the results from each textbook regarding post-reading tasks.

5.2.2 Post-reading tasks

Compared to pre-reading tasks, there are post-reading tasks to all the literary texts in all the textbooks. In the far left column I have put the different categories of post-reading tasks as presented in chapter 3, 3.4.2. Each of the following columns represents the textbooks, with the number of literary texts in each textbook below their title. The bottom rows sum up the number of post-reading tasks within all categories in each of the textbooks, and the average number of post-reading tasks per text.

Table 5.3 Frequency and distribution of post-reading tasks in the textbooks

CATEGORY/ FREQUENCY	STUNT (46 texts)	PASSAGE (18 texts)	EXPERIENCE (31 texts)	TARGETS (34 texts)	Total
Reading comprehension and details	74	80	70	159	383
Genre analysis and genre specifics	16	1	8	21	46
Reflecting on and analyzing the content of the text	128	59	47	141	375
Being a character	30	6	9	24	69
Dealing with the author and narrative choices	29	17	20	28	94
Sharing experiences	23	1	5	6	35
TOTAL	**300 tasks**	**164 tasks**	**159 tasks**	**379 tasks**	
Average number of tasks per text	6,5	9	5	11	

This table shows that there are huge differences in what kinds of tasks each book comprises. If we take a look at the average number of tasks per text, the number differs considerably from textbook to textbook. There is no clear pattern here either, as the textbook with the least tasks does not have the lowest number of tasks per text, and the textbook with the most literary texts does not have the highest number of tasks. Because of this, the choice of task categories could say something about the general focus on literature in each textbook. The categories that really stand out when looking at all the textbooks and their tasks as a whole, are "Reading comprehension and details", and "Reflecting on and analyzing the content of the text". When looking at each textbook individually, these categories clearly dominate; in *Targets*, which is the textbook with the most post-reading tasks, "Reading comprehension and details" tasks make up for 42% of the total number of tasks, with "Reflecting on and analyzing the content of the text" at 37%. In *Passage*, the textbook with the least post-reading tasks, the numbers are 48,5% and 36% respectively. The category which occurs least often is "Sharing experiences", most likely because it is more of a pre-reading task. However, *Stunt* does have a significant number of tasks within this particular category compared to the

other textbooks, although "Sharing experiences" only make up about 8% of the total number of tasks in *Stunt*. There are also individual differences within the category "Genre analysis and genre specifics" – in *Targets*, this category makes up 5,5%, whereas in *Passage*, it only makes up 0,6%. This varying high and/or low frequency of certain types of tasks can point to a specific theoretical approach which I will discuss in the next chapter.

5.2.3 Other types of tasks

Some of the textbooks did turn out to have other tasks than just pre-reading and post-reading tasks, and in this paragraph I will account for them as well. *Stunt* is the only textbook in this material that has mid-reading tasks as well as pre- and post-reading tasks. As stated in chapter 2, I have not included mid-reading tasks in this study because this type of task is not represented in the remainder of my material, but I will comment briefly on how it is used in *Stunt*. Mid-reading tasks are usually applied to the short stories, as they are the texts that are of some length. The task section itself is placed next to the text and within the text itself. In *Stunt*, the mid-reading tasks are categorized as "Checkpoints" tasks, meaning that they are about reading comprehension, basically what is happening in the text, or specific details about the text, for example descriptions. This allows the students and the teacher to stop the reading for a short while and solve these tasks, probably to ensure that all the students understand what is happening in the story before they continue reading. *Stunt* also includes a task type called "Creative Stunts!", which are tasks asking the students to write personal texts, for example letters to other characters or personal notes like diary entries, or create a dialogue or a role play between characters, etc.. It seems that these tasks are different from the other task types as these tasks will, for example, ask the students to imagine that they are one of the characters. This is not an option in the other types of tasks, meaning that the name "Creative Stunts!" is indeed fitting for this category. The other textbook which has some untraditional task types is *eXperience*, and although the tasks themselves are not that different, *eXperience* has its own task section, "Choices", where students are allowed to choose what task they would like to do. They can choose between A, B and C, which are usually different tasks within the same area, such as "Writing", with for example A asking the students to write a continuation of the story, B asking them to write a diary entry and C asking them to write a short summary. There can also be three different tasks, one dealing with writing, the second with speaking and the last with reading. This may spur the creativity of some students as they are allowed to choose their own task, and if they do not feel like writing, they do not

necessarily have to, but can easily choose another task. Both "Creative Stunts!" and "Choices" have been added to the total number of tasks.

Below is a summarizing overview of the number of texts and tasks in each of the textbooks. Presented here is the total number of relevant literary texts in each textbook, the average number of pre-reading tasks per text as summarized from table 5.2, and the number of post-reading tasks per text as seen in table 5.3.

Table 5.4 Overview of total numbers of texts and number of tasks per text

	STUNT	PASSAGE	EXPERIENCE	TARGETS
No. of literary texts	46	18	31	34
No. of pre-reading tasks per text	0,5	0,5	0,4	0,6
No. of post-reading tasks per text	6,5	8	5	11

What can be seen here are the large differences from textbook to textbook, which lies in the number of literary texts, and the number of post-reading tasks per text. The textbooks do have very similar numbers when it comes to pre-reading tasks per text, but as could be seen from table 5.2, only 50% of the literary texts actually have pre-reading tasks. In comparison, all the literary texts have post-reading tasks. In addition, *Stunt*, which has the highest number of texts, has one of the lowest numbers of post-reading tasks per text, and *Passage*, which has 18 texts vs. *Stunt'*s 46, has one of the highest numbers of post-reading tasks. *Targets*, which has the highest number of both pre- and post-reading tasks, still has 12 fewer texts than *Stunt*.

From these numbers one might infer that there is a larger focus on literature in those textbooks which have many tasks connected to each text. However, as there are differences in which types of tasks are used, this focus may differ from textbook to textbook as well. If one infers a large focus on literature in the textbooks that have a large number of texts, this may not be a correct assumption either, depending on how the textbook actually uses those texts. The answer to that can, to a certain degree, be determined by the types of tasks each textbook has for each of these texts, both pre- and post-reading. For example, a textbook that has a

large number of analytical tasks may be focusing on what the students can extract from a text in terms of genre specific information, in order to practice their analytical skills for an exam. A textbook with a large number of tasks concerning reader comprehension may be focusing on reading skills, but also on having students remembering details from the texts in case they encounter them again, for example in an exam situation. As the publishing houses which make these textbooks each have to interpret and operationalize the relevant national curriculum and its aims, they will have to create textbooks that fulfill these aims. They also have to do so in such a way that the textbook is approved and deemed useful by teachers. On the one hand, the textbooks need to prepare the students and equip them with the skills they need in order to do well in exams, but on the other they also need to help them to develop their own skills on a personal level, as is declared in the objectives of the subject and in some of the competence aims. However, how each textbook actually interprets the national curriculum and where they choose to put their focus, will differ from textbook to textbook – this may lead to different results in a national exam, as some students may have experience working with particular subjects within the subject of English itself, because it is a part of the textbook they have used, which other students have not, simply because they have used a different textbook. Of course, this is a very tentative claim and I have not taken each individual school, teacher and group of students into consideration here, but the basic idea is understandable.

The results presented in this chapter will be discussed in detail in the next chapter where all the different task categories will be examined with regard to the theories and theoretical approaches. In the following section I will introduce the texts which can be found in more than one textbook, one poem and one short story, and show how the different textbooks treat these texts with particular emphasis on the tasks connected to the texts.

5.3 Similar texts, different approaches

As a way of illustrating how different two textbooks can be in regard to what kinds of texts they have and what kinds of tasks there are to each text, I looked for texts that appeared in more than one of the textbooks, and then how it was presented in the two textbooks and what tasks came with the texts. All the texts that appear in more than one textbook can be seen in appendix 1-4, I chose “The Road Not Taken”, a poem by Robert Frost that appears in *Stunt* and *eXperience*, and “The Sniper” by Liam O’Flaherty, which is a short story and appears in

Passage and *Targets*. By choosing these two texts, I can have a look at two different text genres, the poem and the short story, and also, all four textbooks in the study are included.

5.3.1 *The Road Not Taken*

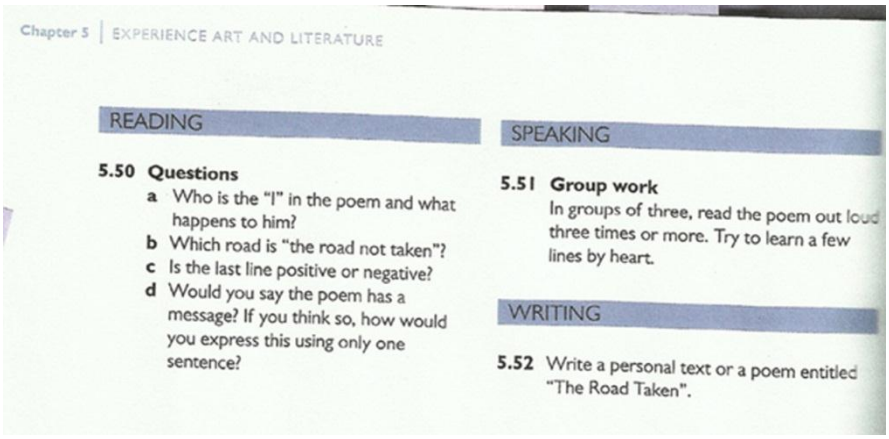
Both *Stunt* and *eXperience* acknowledge Frost's popularity as a poet, and claim that he is the closest to being a national poet in America. I distinctively remember working with this very poem when I was a high school student myself. Frost has an ease and simplicity about him that I think many students can appreciate, and which should make his literature a good choice for English textbooks. In *Stunt*, "The Road Not Taken" is placed in chapter 1 called "No Man is an Island", and under the chapter section called "Values". It is considered to be of medium difficulty, and the theme is "Choices". In *eXperience*, the poem is placed in chapter 5 called "eXperience Art and Literature", and is part of a section about movie analysis, the movie in question being *Dead Poet's Society*. The textbooks both present Frost before the text, and they both have some of the vocabulary used in the poem, explained.

Pre-reading tasks

None of the textbooks have pre-reading tasks for this text.

Post-reading tasks

eXperience has both "Reading", "Speaking" and "Writing" tasks to this text:



Chapter 5 | EXPERIENCE ART AND LITERATURE

READING

5.50 Questions

a Who is the "I" in the poem and what happens to him?
b Which road is "the road not taken"?
c Is the last line positive or negative?
d Would you say the poem has a message? If you think so, how would you express this using only one sentence?

SPEAKING

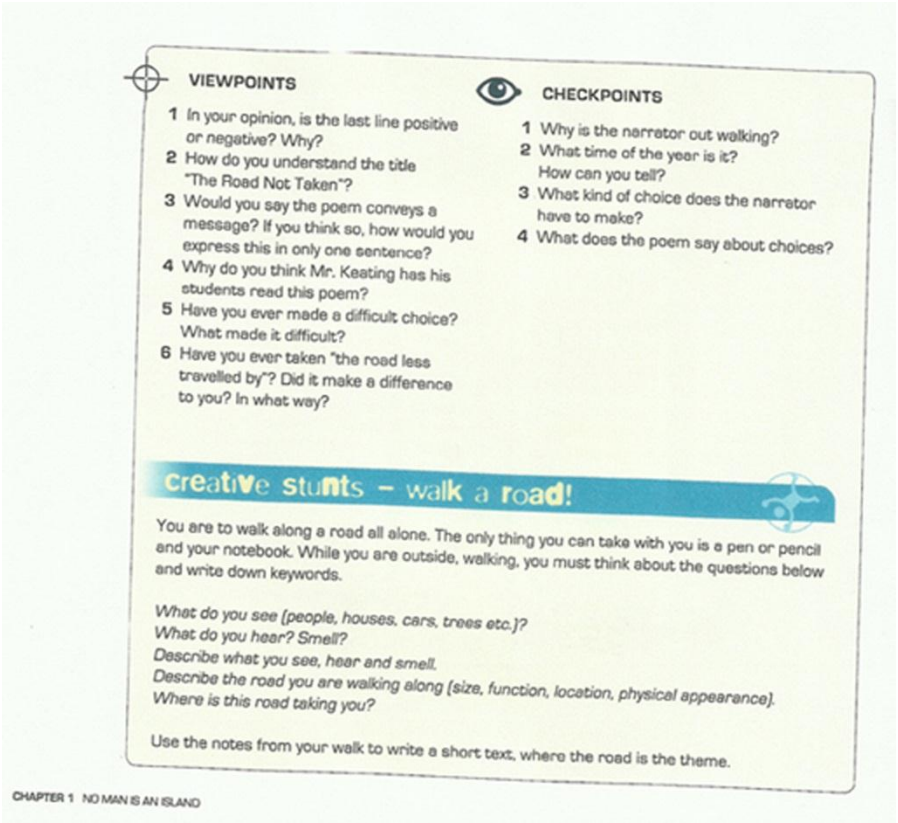
5.51 Group work

In groups of three, read the poem out loud three times or more. Try to learn a few lines by heart.

WRITING

5.52 Write a personal text or a poem entitled "The Road Taken".

Stunt has "Viewpoints", "Checkpoints" and "Creative Stunts!" tasks to this text:



VIEWPOINTS

1 In your opinion, is the last line positive or negative? Why?
2 How do you understand the title "The Road Not Taken"?
3 Would you say the poem conveys a message? If you think so, how would you express this in only one sentence?
4 Why do you think Mr. Keating has his students read this poem?
5 Have you ever made a difficult choice? What made it difficult?
6 Have you ever taken "the road less travelled by"? Did it make a difference to you? In what way?

CHECKPOINTS

1 Why is the narrator out walking?
2 What time of the year is it? How can you tell?
3 What kind of choice does the narrator have to make?
4 What does the poem say about choices?

creative stunts – walk a road!

You are to walk along a road all alone. The only thing you can take with you is a pen or pencil and your notebook. While you are outside, walking, you must think about the questions below and write down keywords.

What do you see (people, houses, cars, trees etc.)?
What do you hear? Smell?
Describe what you see, hear and smell.
Describe the road you are walking along (size, function, location, physical appearance).
Where is this road taking you?

Use the notes from your walk to write a short text, where the road is the theme.

CHAPTER 1 NO MAN IS AN ISLAND

As can be seen from these excerpts, some of the tasks connected to these texts are fairly similar. Some of the tasks from the different textbooks are in fact identical:

> *eXperience*'s task 4. *"Would you say the poem has a message? If you think so, how would you express this using only one sentence?";*
> and *Stunt*'s task 3. *"Would you say the poem conveys a message? If you think so, how would you express this in only one sentence*",
>
> and also *eXperience*'s task 3. *"Is the last line positive or negative?"*
> and *Stunt*'s task 1. "*In your opinion, is the last line positive or negative? Why?"*

There are also some tasks asking for interpretations of the title in both textbooks, and *eXperience*'s "Writing" task is somewhat similar to *Stunt*'s "Creative Stunts!" task. However, there are some significant differences as well. *eXperience*, unlike *Stunt*, divides tasks into

groups of tasks based on what skill they are meant to develop, such as speaking; in this case the "Speaking" task is to read the poem out loud in small groups, and learn a few lines from the poem by heart. By doing this, the students can attempt to read it as a poem "should" be read, meaning that they can for example apply a certain intonation when they read.

Furthermore, there is no real literary purpose in this task, and it does not belong to any of the task categories. As it is somewhat connected to the text I decided to count it in my material, although it clearly performs another function than many of the other tasks, because while it is somewhat connected, it is also very obliquely connected, and does not say anything about interpretations of the poem etc. *Stunt*'s "Creative Stunts!" task is also somewhat obliquely connected to the text in that the tasks does not mention the poem directly, however, the intention behind it seems to be that the students can find inspiration in Frost's poem before they write their own. Therefore, this task is also added to the material. Next, we can also compare *eXperience*'s "Reading" tasks and *Stunt*'s "Checkpoints", as these seem to be tasks about reading comprehension. Nevertheless, there are some differences here as well. While *Stunt*'s tasks are more straightforward comprehension questions, meaning that the students easily can find the answers in the poem itself, *eXperience*'s tasks are a bit more open for the student's own interpretation. In this way, *eXperience*'s "Reading" tasks are more similar to *Stunt*'s "Viewpoints" tasks, which are very open to the student's own interpretations, there are even a few tasks

Table 5.5 Tasks in *eXperience* – "The Road Not Taken"

***eXperience* / The Road Not Taken**	**Pre-reading tasks / categories**	**Post-reading tasks / categories**
Reading task 1		Dealing with the author and narrative choices
Reading task 2-4		Reflecting on and analyzing the content of the text
Speaking task		No category
Writing task		Reflecting on and analyzing the content of the text

Compare to the results in *Stunt*:

Table 5.6 Tasks in *Stunt* – "The Road Not Taken"

***Stunt* / The Road Not Taken**	**Pre-reading tasks / categories**	**Post-reading tasks / categories**
Viewpoint task 1-2		Dealing with the author and narrative choices
Viewpoint task 3-4, 6		Reflecting on and analyzing the content of the text
Viewpoint task 5		Sharing experiences
Checkpoint task 1-4		Reading comprehension and details
Creative Stunts! task		Reflecting on and analyzing the content of the text

asking about the student's own experiences. The tables below illustrate these differences in tasks and task categories in the two textbooks. In the far left column are the textbook and text in question and the tasks connected to that text. I have used the textbook's own task types to separate between the different groups of tasks. The tasks within the same task category have been grouped together, as can be seen in the far left column, third row, where "Reading" task 2, 3 and 4 all belong to the same task category.

As displayed here, *eXperience*'s "Reading" tasks are categorized as "Dealing with the author and narrative choices" and "Reflecting on and analyzing the content of the text" tasks, whereas *Stunt*'s "Checkpoints" tasks are categorized as "Reading comprehension and details" tasks. *Stunt*'s "Viewpoints" tasks, however, belong to the same categories as the "Reading" tasks from *eXperience*. *eXperience*'s "Writing" task and *Stunt*'s "Creative Stunts!" tasks have also been placed in the same category. *Stunt*'s "Viewpoints" task 5 also adds a fourth category to this group of tasks, namely "Sharing experiences". What is also interesting about the grouping of tasks in these textbooks for this text is that the reading comprehension tasks are not the first tasks, which is unusual. As can also be seen here, the "Speaking" task has not been categorized, but *Stunt*'s "Creative Stunts!" task has, and proves the difference between the two tasks, even if the "Speaking" task from *eXperience* cannot be categorized, the "Creative Stunts!" task has certain features that makes it able to be categorized.

I will come back to these differences in the next chapter, in which I will use the theoretical approaches to make inferences about what seems to be the focus of each individual textbook, which is expected to differ as the presentation of texts and the use of tasks has been different so far. In the next section I will present the short story and how it is treated and what tasks are connected to it.

5.3.2 *The Sniper*

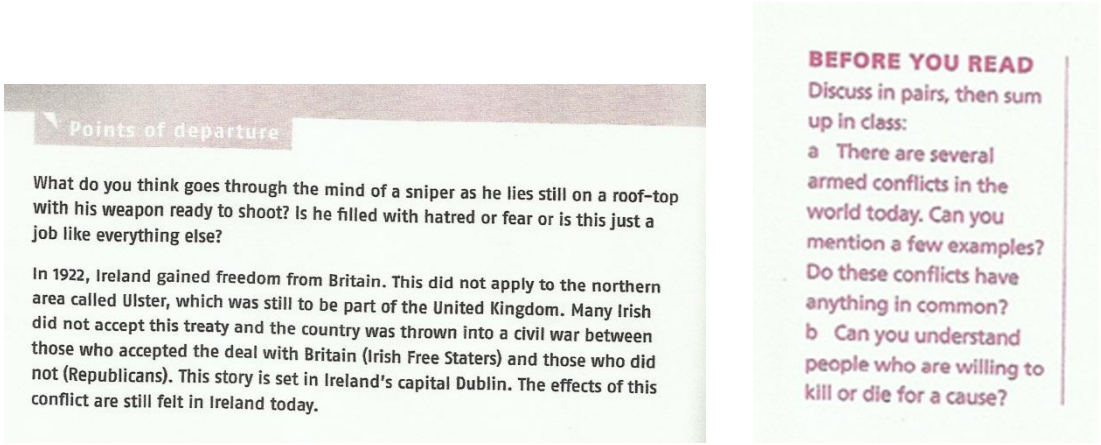
This short story would perhaps also be familiar to some of the students, as it is a well written short story based on real events, and has a really suspenseful storyline. In *Passage*, "The Sniper" is a part of the "Literary Interlude" in chapter 5 called "The Power and the Glory". In *Passage*'s "Points of Departure" for this text, there is some information about the background of this story, namely the Irish civil war in the 1920's, some of this information can also be found in *Targets*, along with information about the author, Liam O'Flaherty. In *Targets,* the

text is placed in chapter 2 called “Around the World” as part of a chapter section about Ireland. The text it its entirety can be found in appendix 5.

Pre-reading tasks

Both textbooks have pre-reading tasks for this text.

Passage vs. Targets



Points of departure

What do you think goes through the mind of a sniper as he lies still on a roof-top with his weapon ready to shoot? Is he filled with hatred or fear or is this just a job like everything else?

In 1922, Ireland gained freedom from Britain. This did not apply to the northern area called Ulster, which was still to be part of the United Kingdom. Many Irish did not accept this treaty and the country was thrown into a civil war between those who accepted the deal with Britain (Irish Free Staters) and those who did not (Republicans). This story is set in Ireland's capital Dublin. The effects of this conflict are still felt in Ireland today.

BEFORE YOU READ

Discuss in pairs, then sum up in class:

a There are several armed conflicts in the world today. Can you mention a few examples? Do these conflicts have anything in common?

b Can you understand people who are willing to kill or die for a cause?

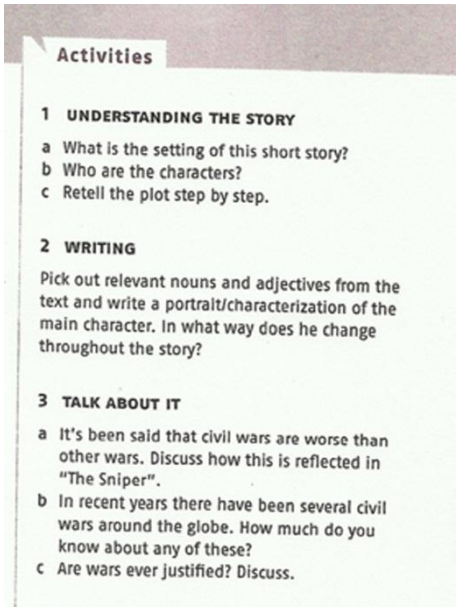
As can be seen, there are a few differences in how these pre-reading tasks are used. In *Targets*, the focus seems to be on understanding the background of the text, with the first pre-reading task asking if the students can mention examples of ongoing wars and conflicts. It also focuses on what these conflicts have in common, which may evoke some reflections about war that can be helpful to bring into the reading of the text afterwards. However, the students are not given any specific information about what the Irish Civil War was about, and therefore cannot compare the conflicts they know of to the one they are to read about. The second pre-reading task in *Targets* may also evoke reflections which could help them “understand” the text and the protagonist better, especially when their thoughts and opinions are to be discussed, as they are in this task. *Passage*’s single pre-reading task is not so different from *Targets*’ tasks. Here the students are to imagine how a sniper thinks, but the task does not necessarily point directly to the text they are going to read, except perhaps if the students have noticed the title of the text. In *Passage*, the background for the civil war is presented before the text, which may be helpful in their interpretation. This information should in my opinion have been presented in *Targets* as well, as I think the pre-reading tasks would be easier to answer if they had been given this piece of information first. In *Passage*, there does not necessarily need to be a section with background information first, as the pre-

reading task might intrigue them to read on and the background information may give away some of the plot. Because of the way the text is written, a sort of "in medias res" (lat. for "into the middle of things") and with short sentences as to imitate rapid movements and excitement, this may also make more of an impact on the students when reading and make them curious about the background of the text.

Post-reading tasks

The textbooks also have post-reading tasks for this text.

Passage has tasks in both "Writing", "Speaking" and "Understanding the story", while ***Targets*** has large number of tasks connected to this text, but the relevant ones are in "Reading" and "Speaking":



Activities

1 UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

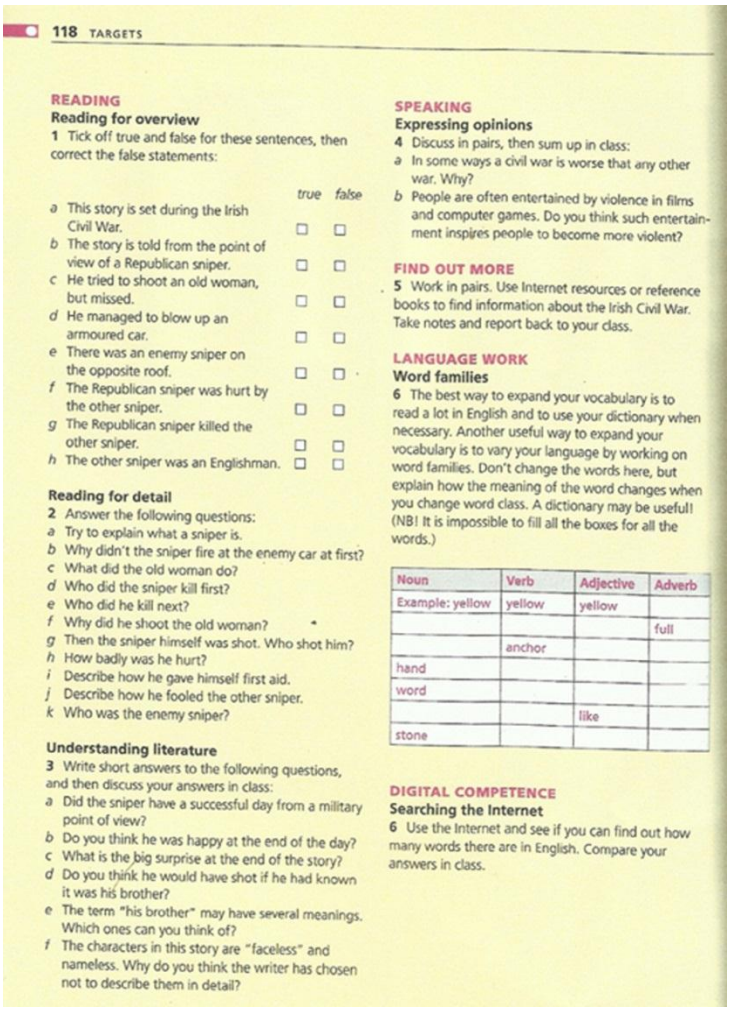
a What is the setting of this short story?
b Who are the characters?
c Retell the plot step by step.

2 WRITING

Pick out relevant nouns and adjectives from the text and write a portrait/characterization of the main character. In what way does he change throughout the story?

3 TALK ABOUT IT

a It's been said that civil wars are worse than other wars. Discuss how this is reflected in "The Sniper".
b In recent years there have been several civil wars around the globe. How much do you know about any of these?
c Are wars ever justified? Discuss.



118 TARGETS

READING

Reading for overview

1 Tick off true and false for these sentences, then correct the false statements:

	true	false
a This story is set during the Irish Civil War.	☐	☐
b The story is told from the point of view of a Republican sniper.	☐	☐
c He tried to shoot an old woman, but missed.	☐	☐
d He managed to blow up an armoured car.	☐	☐
e There was an enemy sniper on the opposite roof.	☐	☐
f The Republican sniper was hurt by the other sniper.	☐	☐
g The Republican sniper killed the other sniper.	☐	☐
h The other sniper was an Englishman.	☐	☐

Reading for detail

2 Answer the following questions:
a Try to explain what a sniper is.
b Why didn't the sniper fire at the enemy car at first?
c What did the old woman do?
d Who did the sniper kill first?
e Who did he kill next?
f Why did he shoot the old woman?
g Then the sniper himself was shot. Who shot him?
h How badly was he hurt?
i Describe how he gave himself first aid.
j Describe how he fooled the other sniper.
k Who was the enemy sniper?

Understanding literature

3 Write short answers to the following questions, and then discuss your answers in class:
a Did the sniper have a successful day from a military point of view?
b Do you think he was happy at the end of the day?
c What is the big surprise at the end of the story?
d Do you think he would have shot if he had known it was his brother?
e The term "his brother" may have several meanings. Which ones can you think of?
f The characters in this story are "faceless" and nameless. Why do you think the writer has chosen not to describe them in detail?

SPEAKING

Expressing opinions

4 Discuss in pairs, then sum up in class:
a In some ways a civil war is worse that any other war. Why?
b People are often entertained by violence in films and computer games. Do you think such entertainment inspires people to become more violent?

FIND OUT MORE

5 Work in pairs. Use Internet resources or reference books to find information about the Irish Civil War. Take notes and report back to your class.

LANGUAGE WORK

Word families

6 The best way to expand your vocabulary is to read a lot in English and to use your dictionary when necessary. Another useful way to expand your vocabulary is to vary your language by working on word families. Don't change the words here, but explain how the meaning of the word changes when you change word class. A dictionary may be useful! (NB! It is impossible to fill all the boxes for all the words.)

Noun	Verb	Adjective	Adverb
Example: yellow	yellow	yellow	
			full
	anchor		
hand			
word			
		like	
stone			

DIGITAL COMPETENCE

Searching the Internet

6 Use the Internet and see if you can find out how many words there are in English. Compare your answers in class.

Passage's task section *Understanding the story* seems to have three basic reading comprehension questions, and both *Target*'s "Reading" and "Reading for detail" sections can be said to be about reading comprehension as well. Unlike the post-reading exercises from Frost's poem, these tasks are the first tasks the students encounter after reading, and there are huge differences in the number of reading comprehension tasks in *Passage* and *Targets* (3 vs. 19 tasks respectively). However, a short story like this may be hard to follow due to the way it is written, which might be the cause of all these reading comprehension tasks. *Passage*'s next task, the "Writing" task, looks like a typical genre specific task, as it asks the students to write a characterization. However, as it also asks them to reflect on how the protagonist changes throughout the story, there may also be an aspect of "Reflecting on and analyzing the content of the text", but this appears as a subordinate clause.

The next group of tasks in *Passage*, *Talk about it*, features three tasks quite similar to the two pre-reading tasks from *Targets*. These are also intended to be oral tasks, and by having read the text, the students can now more easily answer task 1 and they can use their reflections from reading the text and what their answer to the pre-reading task was, in order to answer task 3. Task 2 also specifies that it is about civil wars, not wars in general, and the students might easier remember wars or conflicts that may have had something in common with the war they have just read about. *Targets'* tasks in *Understanding literature* may look like reading comprehension tasks, but they are about interpretations of the text. Among the 6 tasks in this grouping there are small differences in what category they belong to, most of them are however about interpretation of the text and the background for the story. There is one task about reading comprehension, task 3, which seems unnecessary as I think most students will have been able to understand the ending. Task 5 and 6 brings up the author and the way the story is written, which also has an aspect of reading comprehension and reflection on the text, as it asks how the students understood the particular feature. The answers to the tasks in this grouping is supposed to be discussed, which could be fruitful as many of the tasks ask for the student's own interpretations and it could be interesting to see how your classmates interpreted the same text.

The last group of tasks in *Targets* is "Speaking", with the subtitle "Expressing opinions". The first task is almost identical to *Passage*'s first "Talk about it" task, except in *Passage*, the students are to discuss how this is reflected in the text, whereas in *Targets* the question is not directly connected to the text. However, having read the text, the students may

more easily be able to answer it with the text in mind, and reflect on what features of the story that could point to how a civil war could be worse than others. The second task is also very indirectly connected to the text, the students do not have to have read the text to answer this, and it is as if the task implies that wars are started because of films and computer games.

The following tables will illustrate the frequency of tasks and categories of tasks in regard to "The Sniper" in each of the textbooks. In the far left column are the textbook and text in question and the tasks connected to that text. I have used the textbooks' task types to separate between the different groups of tasks. The tasks within the same task category have been grouped together, as can be seen in the far left column, where for example "Understanding the story" tasks 1 and 2, and "Talk about it" task 1, 2 and 3 are grouped together as they belong to the same task category.

Table 5.7 Tasks and task categories in *Passage* – "The Sniper"

***Passage*/ The Sniper**	**Pre-reading tasks**	**Post-reading tasks**
Points of departure	Reflecting on experiences	
Understanding the story tasks 1-2		Genre analysis and genre specifics
Understanding the story task 3		Reading comprehension and details
Writing task		Genre analysis and genre specifics
Talk about it task 1-3		Reflecting on and analyzing the content of the text

Table 5.8 Tasks and task categories in *Targets* – "The Sniper"

***Targets*/ The Sniper**	**Pre-reading tasks**	**Post-reading tasks**
Before you read task 1	General reflections and opinions on a topic	
Before you read task 2	Reflecting on experiences	
Reading for overview task 1-8		Reading comprehension and details
Reading for detail task 1-11		Reading comprehension and detail
Understanding literature task 1-2, 4		Reflecting on and analyzing the content of the text
Understanding literature task 3		Reading comprehension and details
Understanding literature task 5-6		Dealing with the author and narrative choices
Speaking tasks 1-2		Reflecting on and analyzing the content of the text

The table summary shows there are differences in how each textbook treats the particular text, especially with regard to the number of tasks available for each text. The categories that are represented here are however quite similar in both textbooks. They both also have pre-reading tasks in the category "Reflecting on experiences", as they both ask the students to imagine a certain situation. *Targets*' other pre-reading task is about general reflections on the topic of war and conflicts – interestingly enough, *Passage* has a post-reading task which is almost identical, namely *Talk about it* task 2.

When it comes to the post-reading tasks, the number of tasks differs very much from textbook to textbook. Where *Passage* has one task dealing with reading comprehension, *Targets* has a total of 20 tasks within this category, "Reading for overview" task 1-8, "Reading for detail" task 1-11, and "Understanding literature" task 3. *Passage*, however, does have three tasks within the category of genre analysis, "Understanding the story" tasks 1-2 and the "Writing" task, the "Writing" task is however a bit of both this category and the "Reflecting on and analyzing the content" category, where *Targets* has none. *Targets* has two tasks in the "Dealing with the author and narrative choices" category, namely "Understanding literature" task 5 and 6, as both tasks based on the author's use of words and descriptions.

However, task 5 can also be understood as a task about reflecting on the content, as it does not mention the author; nevertheless, as it asks about a word choice intentionally made by the author, it belongs to that category as well. *Targets* also has a few more tasks within the category "Reflecting on and analyzing the content of the text" than *Passage*, and except for *Targets*' numeral reading comprehension tasks, this is the category that generally dominates the post-reading tasks in both textbooks, and both textbooks intend for the tasks to be done orally either in pairs, groups or in class.

Overall, it would seem that *Targets* wants the students to go a bit deeper into what the story is about, and wants them to imagine themselves being the sniper, and wants them to really reflect on the story. However, as there are so many reading comprehension questions, *Targets* runs the risk of catching Macalister's "death by comprehension questions syndrome". By the time the students reach the other tasks, they may be quite fed up with the whole text. *Passage*, on the other hand, does not have as many reading comprehension tasks, but it does not go as deep into the text itself with its tasks as *Targets* does. However, its pre-reading task could bring forth an interesting discussion where the students could air their opinions, and I would have liked to see this as a post-reading task instead, where some of the aspects from the story that are focused on in *Targets'* tasks could be emphasized. Compared to each other, *Passage* seems to treat the text more superficially than *Targets*, despite *Targets'* many reading comprehension tasks.

In the next chapter I will discuss what implications these editorial choices and different types of tasks may have on the reading activity as a whole what seems to be the theoretical background for these choices.

5.4 Summary

In this chapter the results from the analyses of the textbooks' presentation of texts and what tasks are used, have been presented. I have presented results from the textbook analysis with emphasis on its design, and on how the literary texts are distributed and what emphasis is put on them. I have also looked at the role the author is given and whether or not the students are given any background material before reading. Only *Passage* will deliberately give students such background information, in the other textbooks the students depend on the other factual texts in the textbook for background information. However, *Passage* was also the only

textbook with more factual texts than literary texts. There were also some differences in the distribution and categorizing of texts made by the textbooks, and the role of the author was different in all the textbooks. Next, the use of tasks has also been accounted for. All the textbooks have been examined and every relevant task based on the categories presented in chapter 3 have been counted and categorized, and the results have been displayed in the numerous tables found in this chapter. There are some significant differences from textbook to textbook in how many tasks there are to each text and what categories appear to be more frequent. The use of pre-reading tasks also differs very much from textbook to textbook. When it comes to the texts found in more than one textbook, "The Road Not Taken" and "The Sniper", there were also some variations in what tasks were available for these texts. In the next chapter I will discuss these results in light of relevant theory and theoretical approaches, both by classifying the textbooks individually and by comparing them to each other. I will also take a closer look at the two texts featured in more than one textbook and see whether these texts and the treatment of them can be said to be typical of each textbook by using these differences as a way of illustrating the differences between the textbooks as a whole.

6 Discussion

In this chapter I will discuss the results from the previous chapter in light of the theory presented in chapter 2. I will be going through each part of these results through the areas of focus in my research statement and discuss how the results answer to these areas. I will start by summing up the main findings from the previous chapter and how these fit into my areas of focus, before turning to the discussion in which I will use the same order as in this first section to comment on the findings in light of theory. I will end the discussion by summing up the section, and saying something about the validity in this study before summarizing the chapter.

6.1 Main findings

My research statement and areas of focus was as follows:

How are literary texts and the aspect of literature treated in four textbooks in VG1 English?

The areas of focus were:

How are literary texts presented in the textbooks?

What kinds of tasks are connected to the literary texts and what do these tasks induce

What differences are there in the treatment of literary texts in the four textbooks?

I will now go through them individually, summing up the results within each area.

6.1.1 How are literary texts presented in the textbooks?

In this area of focus I wanted to take a look at the textbook's design and editorial choices, for example how the literary texts were distributed, how many there were, how they were used with regard to other texts and whether the students were given additional information about the text such as background information, information about the author, etc. Overall, the four textbooks all had a different percentage of literary texts in them compared to the percentage of factual and/or "other" texts. *Stunt* had 41%, *Passage* had 29%, and *eXperience* and *Targets* each had 45%. *Passage* is therefore the textbook with the lowest percentage, and it also had more factual texts and "other" texts than literary texts. *Passage*, however, focuses on

literature through a separate section of the chapters, which might be an attempt to compensate for the small number of literary texts throughout the rest of the textbook. It is the only textbook to do so. Nevertheless, the texts featured in this section are generally given more attention, but they seem to be out of context based on the general content of the chapters in which they are placed.

When it comes to the distribution and categorization into different chapters, the criteria for being placed in one chapter or the other varied from textbook to textbook. *eXperience*, which had chapter names such as "Personal eXperience", and "Intercultural eXperience", and *Stunt*, which had somewhat unclear chapter names but made it clear what themes were covered in each chapter and each text, such as "Values" or "Individuality", are similar in this respect. Through a focus on what the texts in these textbooks are about on a more personal and perhaps emotional level, they both seem to be occupied with the students' individual experience of reading. *Targets* had chapters named after general thematic areas of the subject, such as "Around the World", "British Culture and Society" and "American Culture and Society". There was also a large focus on the authors' ethnicities, which seemed to be the measure for which chapter the text is placed in, for example Native American writers in the chapter "First Nations". *Passage* also had somewhat unclear chapter names, similar to *Stunt*, such as "The Power and the Glory", "On the Move" and "We Were Here First". However, the choice of literary texts seems to be a bit arbitrary, as the texts in each chapter are not necessarily understood to be a part of a larger category of texts and topics. This makes *Passage* differ from *Stunt,* which clarified which themes were covered in the text despite having similar chapter names. Therefore, *Targets* and *Passage* are more alike. They both use a categorization based on author ethnicity and general thematic areas from the entire subject of English, and seem to focus more on the factual content in their chapters and thereby what kind of factual knowledge the students can draw from the literary texts. This notion is strengthened by *Passage* being the only textbook that specifically supplied background information for literary texts. When it comes to presenting the author, *Stunt* and *Targets* always presented the author before the text, *eXperience* usually did it, while *Passage* hardly ever did it, despite often providing background information.

6.1.2 What kinds of tasks are connected to the literary texts and what do these tasks induce?

I wanted to take a look at the tasks for each of the literary texts because the types of tasks that are used with literary texts says something about why and how the literary texts are worked with, whether it is to enhance literary competence or developing other basic skills. By counting the relevant tasks for each literary text in these four textbooks, I found that approximately 50% of the literary texts in all four textbooks had, on average, one or more pre-reading tasks. Of the pre-reading task categories, the category that was used most often was "Reflecting on experiences", except in *Targets* where the category "General reflections and opinions on a topic" was used more often, and was also the second largest category overall. There were not many differences from textbook to textbook in the remaining categories either, *Stunt* and *Targets* which had the most literary texts also had the most pre-reading tasks, and the numbers from these two textbooks were generally very similar. The same goes for the two textbooks with the least number of texts and tasks, *Passage* and *eXperience*, which numbers were also similar in this respect.

When it comes to the average number of post-reading tasks per text, this was more varied: *Stunt* had 6,5 tasks per text, *Passage* had 9, *eXperience* had 5 and *Targets* had 11. Unlike the pre-reading task results, these numbers are not parallel to how many literary texts each textbook has. The task category "Reading comprehension and details" is used most often, except in *Stunt* where the category "Reflecting on and analyzing the content of the text" is used more frequent – this is also the second largest category overall. The differences from textbook to textbook in this respect were more varied than with the pre-reading tasks: *Passage* and *eXperience* were still similar with regard to the number of tasks within each category, as were *Stunt* and *Targets*, but these two textbooks also had individual differences. Examples are "Sharing experiences" in which *Stunt* has 23 tasks while *Targets* has 6 tasks, and "Reading comprehension and details" in which *Stunt* has 74 tasks and *Targets* had 159 tasks. Other tasks that were featured in some of these textbooks were *Stunt*'s mid-reading tasks in addition to pre- and post-reading tasks, and "Creative Stunts!" which were more elaborate tasks in its own individual section. *eXperience* also had its own task section, "Choices", where students can choose between different types of tasks. With regard to what these different tasks induce I will come back to that in the discussion part of this chapter.

6.1.3 What differences are there in the treatment of literary texts in the four textbooks?

This area deals with both of the previous areas of focus, with particular emphasis on the differences between them. I have already summed up some of these differences in the previous sections, but in the analysis itself I also wanted to compare the textbooks more directly, and therefore chose to look at two texts which were featured in more than one textbook. These were "The Road Not Taken", featured in *Stunt* and *eXperience*, and "The Sniper", featured in *Passage* and *Targets*.

"The Road Not Taken" was treated quite similarly in both *Stunt* and *eXperience*, especially based on the task categories which were represented; there were even a few tasks in which the wording was identical. However, the way the text is presented differs in the two textbooks – in *Stunt*, it is presented as part of a section about movie analysis, which is also evident in the tasks for this text. The largest differences between the two textbooks is nevertheless the number of tasks for the text, *eXperience* has six different tasks while *Stunt* has 11 tasks, and the tasks are also from different task categories even if they are grouped together in the textbook.

"The Sniper" is a short story and unlike "The Road Not Taken", this text also had pre-reading tasks. In *Passage*, "The Sniper" is a part of the "Literary Interlude" and it also has background information given before the text, along with information about the author. In *Targets*, the text is part of a chapter section about Ireland, but the text is not provided with specific background information. In *Passage*, the pre-reading task for this text is given along with the background information. The task itself is not so different from one of *Targets*' tasks and they are both in the category "Reflecting on experiences", the second task in *Targets* is in "General reflections and opinions on a topic". The post-reading tasks for this text, however, differ very much from textbook to textbook. First of all, the number of tasks is perhaps the most significant difference, as *Passage* has one task in the category "Reading comprehension and details", while *Targets* has a total of 20 tasks within this category. This is also the first category of tasks the students encounter in *Targets* for this text, in *Passage* it is actually "Genre analysis and genre specifics" which is the first category.

Having summarized the main findings from my analysis, in the following section I will discuss these results in light of the relevant theory.

6.2 Discussion

Throughout this section I will discuss my two first areas of focus individually before summing up to discuss the third area, and finally what the answer to my research statement seems to be. This section will therefore follow the same setup as the previous section.

6.2.1 How are literary texts presented in the textbooks?

Textbook design

In this section I will discuss the use of background information and information about the author. Starting with the presentation of the author - by adding information about the author of a text, the students are more easily able to relive the situation portrayed in the text through the eyes of the author as I.A.Richards aimed for (Jefferson 1986). However, according to New Criticism, the author need not to be mentioned, as he/she is not important, the text in itself is. The theory also rejects social and biographical information, meaning that adding texts with important social and political content is pointless as they will not be read nor used because of this content and it will not be emphasized in any way. In comparison, as Christenbury argues, "by suggesting that the writer and the reader have the same ideas and feelings, they are "allied, equal, and in the same human territory" (1992, p.33), the students may feel that their experience is more accepted and "real" if they can identify with an author rather than just fictional stories and characters. Nevertheless, reader response theory would also have us think that the meaning of a text is the result of a transaction between the text and its reader, so the author does not necessarily have to be emphasized in reader response theory either. The reason why the author is mentioned in many of these textbooks I assume is to develop a literary competence in the students and familiarize them with some central authors in English literature as part of an English or even international literary heritage as well as emphasizing the large variety of English authors there is out there.

By omitting information about the author and the background of the text, readers can interpret the text as they see it, and by their own interpretation of words, form and the general theme achieve a completely free interpretation of a text. However, by omitting background information, some students may misinterpret a text, or not get through it at all because there are a lot of terms they do not understand. Therefore, if the students are provided with some background information before reading a text, they will be able to activate and expand their

content schema, and it may also make the reading process easier as they will know what certain terms mean. The aspect of background information is very much within reader response theory as it often emphasizes the context of the text.

The only textbook in my material that has its own section for such background information is *Passage*, the other textbooks rely on the other kinds of texts in the specific chapter to provide a context. As mentioned in chapter 2, section 2.6.1, if the students do not have the right schema before reading, their comprehension will be weakened, and information about the text which could aid comprehension should therefore, in most cases, be given to them prior to reading. However, as *Passage* is the only textbook with such a section, we may infer that the other textbooks solve this by incorporating the literary texts into chapters that give them a context, which the chapter names presented in section 6.1.1 could be evidence of.

It does seem like most of these textbooks use literature to illustrate certain topics and themes, together with factual texts and other texts. There are, however, some differences in whether the textbooks imply that the students are to read the text to look for factual information, or if reading these texts is supposed to be an individual activity with other, more personal goals.

6.2.2 What kinds of tasks are connected to the literary texts and what do these tasks induce?

In the following I present the different pre- and post-reading task categories and their theoretical support. They are summed up in tables, the different categories are sorted with the largest category first and descending, starting with pre-reading task categories:

Table 6.1 Pre-reading task categories and theoretical support

PRE-READING TASK CATEGORY	THEORETICAL SUPPORT
Reflecting on experiences	Aesthetic reading
General reflections and opinions on a topic	Efferent reading
Associations to title and content prediction	Reader response theory
The text, genre specifics, its background and content	New Criticism / Richards
Questions regarding the subject of English in general	Efferent reading
Being or describing a character	Aesthetic/efferent reading

Pre-reading tasks

Although pre-reading tasks were not as frequent in these textbooks as the post-reading tasks, they still serve a purpose. As could be seen in the previous chapter, section 5.2.2, almost 50% of the literary texts in each textbook had pre-reading tasks, the most frequent category being "Reflecting on experiences". Because pre-reading tasks are supposed to "provide the bridge between a student's experience and the literature" so the students can understand the text through their own personal associations. The fact that this task category is the most frequent is not surprising, because pre-reading tasks can induce a certain type of reading, more aesthetic or more efferent as discussed in chapter 2, section 2.1.3, which will color the reading experience and the end result of the reading. As can be seen in table 6.1, the different task categories belong to a variety of theoretical frameworks, the largest category to aesthetic reading within reader response theory. After that follows "General reflections…", also within reader response theory, but on the efferent side of the continuum (see chapter 2, section 2.3.2). The next is "Associations to title and content prediction", which is also based on reader response theory in general, as it is very reader-centred. The following category is "The text, genre specifics, its background and content", a task category which is somewhat two-sided, depending on whether the focus is on genre specifics and thereby a New Critical approach, or on background information and content, an approach based on Richards. The last categories are "Questions regarding the subject of English in general", which seems to be

made up of irrelevant tasks, and "Being or describing a character", which is more of a post-reading task. These could both be tasks inducing an efferent reading, however, there is an aesthetic aspect in "Being or describing a character", if the task asks the students to actually be a character.

As can be seen from this, there is a quite uneven distribution between the two theories within the pre-reading tasks, as most of the pre-reading tasks do reflect reader response theory. However, the two largest categories, "Reflecting on experiences" and "General reflections and opinions on a topic", will induce two very different ways of reading. There are some individual differences in what category is the largest, for example: three out of four textbooks have more "Reflecting on experiences" tasks as pre-reading tasks than any other task category, except *Targets* which has "General reflections and opinions on a topic" as the largest pre-reading task category. The following table combines the pre-reading task categories and their theoretical support with the task types and frequency in each textbook. As there is only 1 task in the category "Being or describing a character", which is a two-parted category, in three of these textbooks, the tasks has been counted as being 50% of each theory, so 1 task is counted as 0,5 tasks.

Table 6.3 Pre-reading tasks categories and distribution with theoretical support

PRE-READING TASK CATEGORY	THEORETICAL SUPPORT	STUNT	PASSAGE	EXPERIENCE	TARGETS
Reflecting on experiences	Aesthetic reading	9	4	5	5
General reflections and opinions on a topic	Efferent reading	6	2	2	6
Associations to title and content prediction	Reader response theory	5	1	2	5
The text, genre specifics, its background and content	New Criticism / Richards	3	2	0	3
Questions regarding the subject of English in general	Efferent reading	2	0	2	2
Being or describing a character	Aesthetic/efferent reading	1	1	1	0
NUMBER OF TASKS FROM EACH THEORY					
	Aesthetic / reader response	14,5 (56 %)	5,5 (55 %)	7,5 (62,5 %)	10 (47 %)
	Efferent / reader response	8,5 (33 %)	2,5 (25 %)	4,5 (37,5 %)	8 (38 %)
	New Criticism / Richards	3 (11 %)	2 (20 %)	0	3 (15 %)

From this we can see that *Stunt*'s pre-reading tasks are largely based on reader response theory approaches, and mostly feature tasks which induce an aesthetic reading but also an efferent reading in some cases. Only a few pre-reading tasks seem to draw upon New Criticism. The same goes for *Passage*, but the number of New Critical tasks is larger. *eXperience* has no New Critical pre-reading tasks and mostly reader response based tasks. *Targets* has a small percentage of New Critical tasks, and a few more tasks that induce an aesthetic reading than an efferent reading.

Post-reading tasks

The following table presents the post-reading task categories and their theoretical support:

Table 6.2 Post-reading task categories and theoretical support

POST-READING TASK CATEGORY	THEORETICAL SUPPORT
Reading comprehension and details	Efferent reading / New Criticism
Reflecting on and analyzing the content of the text	Aesthetic reading
Dealing with the author and narrative choices	Aesthetic reading / Richards
Being a character	Aesthetic reading / Richards
Genre analysis and genre specifics	Efferent reading / New Criticism
Sharing experiences	Aesthetic reading

As these tasks precede the literary texts, how the students will have read the texts depends on what kind of reading the pre-reading tasks have induced, whether they are applying an aesthetic or an efferent way of reading. However, as many texts do not have pre-reading tasks and many students are unlikely to remember the whole text by heart, I presume that most of them will go back to the text when they start to work on the post-reading tasks. Therefore, most post-reading tasks will also affect the way students read. Of the categories, the task category "Reading comprehension and details" is the one with the largest number of tasks of

all the different categories. These tasks are often the first tasks the students encounter when having finished the text, and the impression is that their purpose is to ensure that all the students have paid attention while reading. If the students are expecting comprehension questions in the end of every literary text, this will undoubtedly affect the way they are reading, making the text seem more as a fact-based text in which they are to find a certain type of information and will thereby be read efferently. However, if there is a strong focus on the content of the text without any other interpretations, this task category is also well within New Criticism, especially if the text in question is not connected to any topic presented in the textbook either before or after the literary text.

The next category, "Reflecting on and analyzing the content of the text", is the second largest category of post-reading tasks, and manifests Rosenblatt's transactional theory – the text does not necessarily have one meaning, it is up to the students to define what they feel is the meaning of the text. As Christenbury (1992) suggests, all students may find their interpretation supported by the text, because they all read and interpret the text differently, and their interpretations are all equally valid. The following category is "Dealing with the author and narrative choices", a category well within reader response theory through the distinct focus on the author, which is not applicable to New Criticism theories, it in fact defies the "intentional fallacy" of Wimsatt and Beardsley (Jefferson 1986). It could however be on the efferent reading part of the continuum in reader response theory if there is a focus on how the work in question can be studied as a document in the author's biography. However, there is clearly an aspect of Richards' theory here, as he opens up for an analysis based on what the author may have felt about his own work, why he has written it. The next task, "Being a character", is also two-parted: if the students are supposed to interpret the author, these task draws upon New Criticism and also Richards' theory, but as there is a clear focus on the students being another character and through that experience are to reflect on themselves as well, these tasks reflect reader response theory, more on the aesthetic reading part of the continuum than the efferent reading part.

The following category, "Genre analysis and genre specifics", also draws upon New Criticism, and especially Richards' theories, to the extent the tasks require the students to know about the author and have that information in mind while analyzing the text. There may also be an aspect of reader response theory here, if the students are looking for such genre specific features while reading, without really letting themselves be affected by them. This

may lead to a more efferent reading, as the reader is concentrating on what symbols designate and what they are contributing to the end result the reader seeks (Rosenblatt 1994). Therefore, as suggested by Bleich (1980), both tasks in this category and reading comprehension tasks should perhaps not be the first tasks the students encounter, as they should be able to respond subjectively to the text first, as interpretation is "impossible without initial self-involvement" (p.140). The last category, "Sharing experiences", is also clearly based on reader response theory as it deals with what each individual student brings to the text.

The following table combines the post-reading task categories and their theoretical support with the task types and frequency in each textbook. As mentioned earlier, the number of tasks in the two-parted categories is divided by two, meaning that half of the tasks are counted as being in one theoretical group, the other half in another group. For example, the task category "Reading comprehension and details", which has elements of both reader response theory's efferent reading and New Criticism, has 74 tasks in total in *Stunt*. This number is counted as being 50% of each theory, meaning there are 37 tasks in efferent reading and 37 tasks in New Criticism.

Table 6.4 Post-reading tasks categories and distribution with theoretical support

POST-READING TASK CATEGORY	THEORETICAL SUPPORT	STUNT	PASSAGE	EXPERIENCE	TARGETS
Reading comprehension and details	Efferent reading / New Criticism	74	80	70	159
Reflecting on and analyzing the content of the text	Aesthetic reading	128	59	47	141
Dealing with the author and narrative choices	Aesthetic reading / Richards	29	17	20	28
Being a character	Aesthetic reading / Richards	30	6	9	24
Genre analysis and genre specifics	Efferent reading / New Criticism	16	1	8	21
Sharing experiences	Aesthetic reading	23	1	5	6
NUMBER OF TASKS FROM EACH THEORY					
	Aesthetic / reader response	181 (60 %)	71 (43 %)	67 (42 %)	173 (45 %)
	Efferent / reader response	45 (15 %)	41 (25 %)	39 (25 %)	90 (24 %)
	New Criticism / Richards	75 (25%)	52 (32 %)	54 (33 %)	116 (31 %)

From this table we can see how the different theories are reflected in each of the post-reading task categories and how they are distributed in each textbook. *Stunt* stands out by having the highest percentage of aesthetic types of tasks (60%) and the lowest percentage of New Critical types of tasks and efferent types of tasks. The other three textbooks have very similar percentages for the other theoretical approaches. While *Targets*' number of aesthetic tasks is almost as high as *Stunt*'s, it also has a lot of New Critical types of tasks. As displayed here, the two largest categories support two different theories, as could also be seen in the results from the pre-reading tasks in the previous section. However, in post-reading tasks, the students will encounter more tasks from different categories than in the pre-reading exercises where there might only be one task. In general, there are more tasks in these textbooks which induce an aesthetic reading, and only a few tasks that induce efferent reading or that are based on New Criticism, even though the largest task category is in fact the most New Critical of them all. This does not necessarily mean that the textbooks and literary texts with many tasks in this category neglects literature, but that they use reading comprehension questions to have the students practice their reading skills, and should therefore supplement these tasks with tasks that induce aesthetic reading as well to avoid a lack of motivation to work with literary texts.

In the following I will take a look at those texts which were featured in more than one textbook to illustrate the differences between these four textbooks as the last area of focus.

6.2.3 What differences are there in the treatment of literary texts in the four textbooks?

I will in the following take a closer look at those texts which were present in more than one textbook, what tasks were used and if the results from this strengthen the theoretical indications from the previous section. In this section, the theoretical support is more valid, as I have gone into each textbook to see whether the tasks in two-parted categories belong to one or the other theoretical approach.

The texts I looked at were "The Road Not Taken" by Robert Frost, which is in both *eXperience* and *Stunt*, and "The Sniper", which is in both *Passage* and *Targets*. When referring to different tasks I will refer to the presentation of these in the previous chapter, sections 5.3.2 and 5.3.3. I will start with "The Road Not Taken", which was presented in the previous chapter as with all the tasks categorized.

6.2.4 The Road Not Taken / *eXperience* and *Stunt*

Table 6.5 *eXperience*'s "The Road Not Taken" – task categories and theoretical support

***EXPERIENCE* / THE ROAD NOT TAKEN**	**POST-READING TASKS / CATEGORIES**	**THEORETICAL SUPPORT**
Reading task 1	Dealing with the author and narrative choices	Aesthetic reading
Reading task 2-4	Reflecting on and analyzing the content of the text	Aesthetic reading
Speaking task	No category	
Writing task	Reflecting on and analyzing the content of the text	Aesthetic reading

Compare to the results in *Stunt*:

Table 6.6 *Stunt*'s "The Road Not Taken" – task categories and theoretical support

***STUNT* / THE ROAD NOT TAKEN**	**POST-READING TASKS / CATEGORIES**	**THEORETICAL SUPPORT**
Viewpoint task 1-2	Dealing with the author and narrative choices	Aesthetic reading
Viewpoint task 3-4, 6	Reflecting on and analyzing the content of the text	Aesthetic reading
Viewpoint task 5	Sharing experiences	Aesthetic reading
Checkpoint task 1-4	Reading comprehension and details	Efferent reading
Creative Stunts! task	Reflecting on and analyzing the content of the text	Aesthetic reading

As can be seen here, both textbooks have, almost exclusively, tasks which induce an aesthetic reading, except four reading comprehension tasks in *Stunt*. However, these reading comprehension tasks are not the first group of tasks preceding the text, which maintains the aesthetic reading and reader-centered approach *Stunt* apparently aims for. There is also a good variation of tasks in both textbooks, although the total number of tasks is significantly larger in *Stunt* than in *eXperience*. *eXperience* does however have a "Speaking" task which does not

belong in any category, but which could be seen to be a task reflecting New Criticism by the focus on "the words on the page" and also on form, which makes it the only New Critical task for this text. Indeed, this text with its tasks can be considered to be quite typical for *eXperience*, based on the previous discussion of this textbook, but it does not have as many reading comprehension tasks as an average text in this textbook would normally have, based on table 6.6 further up. It also presents the author ahead of this text which is not that typical, but the numerous tasks inducing an aesthetic reading are more typical of *eXperience*. For *Stunt*, these tasks are also typical – the text comes with many tasks requiring an aesthetic stance and a few reading comprehension tasks requiring an efferent stance.

Interestingly enough, there are no New Critical tasks here, which may perhaps make it a bit atypical as well, as one might expect New Critical tasks rather than tasks inducing an efferent reading when working with a poem. The lack of pre-reading tasks is also atypical, but the reason might be that the text in question is a poem. It does however have a "Creative Stunts!" task for this text, which emphasizes the textbook's more reader-centered approach to literature and allowing the students to experience literature on a more personal level. Overall, *Stunt* maintains its aesthetic reading approach through the tasks in this text, whereas *eXperience'*s approach is surprisingly aesthetic as well through the lack of reading comprehension tasks and other tasks inducing an efferent reading, or New Critical tasks which would be more typical for *eXperience*. This is to be expected from working with a poem, as there is hardly any factual information which can be extracted from poems, but one could expect more tasks dealing with the author and narrative choices as well as genre specifics, which is not the case in either of these textbooks.

In the following section we move on to the next text, "The Sniper", which is featured in *Targets* and *Passage*.

6.2.5 The Sniper / *Targets* and *Passage*

The other text, "The Sniper", was also presented in the previous chapter with all the tasks categorized. In this case, we have both pre-reading and post-reading tasks.

Table 6.7 *Passage*'s "The Sniper" – task categories and theoretical support

PASSAGE/ **THE SNIPER**	**PRE-READING TASKS**	**THEORETICAL SUPPORT**	**POST-READING TASKS**	**THEORETICAL SUPPORT**
Points of departure	Reflecting on experiences	Aesthetic reading		
Understanding the story tasks 1-2			Genre analysis and genre specifics	New Criticism
Understanding the story task 3			Reading comprehension and details	Efferent reading
Writing task			Genre analysis and genre specifics	Efferent reading
Talk about it task 1-3			Reflecting on and analyzing the content of the text	Aesthetic reading

Compare to the results in *Targets*:

Table 6.8 *Targets*' "The Sniper" – task categories and theoretical support

Targets/ **The Sniper**	**Pre-reading tasks**	**Theoretical support**	**Post-reading tasks**	**Theoretical support**
Before you read task 1	General reflections and opinions on a topic	Efferent reading		
Before you read task 2	Reflecting on experiences	Aesthetic reading		
Reading for overview task 1-8			Reading comprehension and details	Efferent reading
Reading for detail task 1-11			Reading comprehension and detail	Efferent reading
Understanding literature task 1-2, 4			Reflecting on and analyzing the content of the text	Aesthetic reading
Understanding literature task 3			Reading comprehension and details	Efferent reading
Understanding literature task 5-6			Dealing with the author and narrative choices	Aesthetic reading

When looking at how both task types are used in *Passage*, there is a good balance between the pre-reading task and the post-reading tasks, the way of reading induced by the pre-reading

tasks will help them to answer the post-reading tasks as well. *Targets*, however, runs the risk of catching Macalister's "death by comprehension questions syndrome" (2001), as there are so many of them. These are also the first tasks the students encounter after having finished reading the text. For *Passage*, this text and tasks is somewhat typical, as we could expect an aesthetic pre-reading task. However, that the post-reading tasks would be dominated by New Critical tasks and tasks requiring an efferent reading is somewhat unexpected. Nevertheless, by providing the students with background information ahead of the text, despite being a non-New Critical concept, they may be more prepared to answer such tasks as well.

However, as the students are given background information, and the post-reading tasks are very much occupied with efferent reading, it gives the impression that *Passage* is not too occupied with other aspects of literature than factual information, at least in this case. This text is also in the "Literary Interlude", which should open for other types of tasks, but it does not. Also, because of the combination of not mentioning the author ahead of the text, providing background information and post-reading tasks inducing an efferent reading, the literary text is treated more as a factual text. Except "Talk about it" task 1, this group of tasks, which is considered to induce an aesthetic reading, is not really connected to the text, making *Passage*'s approach seem even less aesthetic and more efferent. Because this text is in the "Literary Interlude" and because most of the tasks connected to this text, along with other editorial choices made, *Passage*'s treatment of this text seems almost purely efferent and even New Critical, more than what *Passage*'s overall impression really is.

While *Targets*' text and tasks may not be typical, as many of the tasks in this example require an efferent stance, these tasks are mainly pure reading comprehension tasks. It has a high number of aesthetic tasks as well, which is reflected here, to some degree. The problem with *Targets*' tasks is that there are simply too many reading comprehension tasks used as the first tasks after the text, which could demotivate the students, especially since they are not prepared for this through the pre-reading tasks. By not providing them with more background information and presenting the author in detail instead, some students might get the idea that this is an autobiographical text. The second pre-reading task also supports this notion. One of the categories that are two-parted, "Dealing with the author and narrative choices", does in this case induce an aesthetic reading and does not reflect Richards' theories, which proves *Targets*' attempt to combine an aesthetic reading approach with dealing with the author. Also, as this text is used as part of a chapter section about Ireland, the focus of the author is

maintained here too. There seems to be a good balance between the pre-reading task inducing an aesthetic reading and the post-reading tasks which do the same, but they get somewhat lost in all the reading comprehension tasks and other tasks inducing an efferent reading. Overall, *Passage's* treatment of this task is more efferent than a typical *Passage* text would get, this is mostly because of editorial choices but also due to an unusually large number of efferent types of tasks. *Targets* has a bit too few tasks inducing an aesthetic reading in order for this text and its tasks to be typical, the numeral reading comprehension tasks along with the editorial choices around this text makes it appear more efferent than is really the case or the intention.

6.2.6 Summing up

What is important to mention is that these task categories and the theoretical approaches they belong to are not dichotomies. There are generally aspects of all the theoretical approaches in all categories, but some lean more towards on theory than another. To be able to conclude, the criteria for which tasks are in which category and which theory this category belongs to in this study has to be quite narrow, even if many of the tasks could belong to more than one category. What we can see from the results of this study is that all these textbooks have aspects of all the theories that I have presented, some more within one theory than others. Furthermore, it is important to remember when attempting to analyze textbooks like this that these types of textbooks are hardly ever independent from its authors and its historical context, as Brumfit and Carter (2000) show that the areas of use for literature are limited, as we cannot separate literature from the history of literature, literary texts from the culture they portray, or examples of the English language (p.25). Therefore, none of the textbooks within this study can be said to draw upon New Criticism exclusively, as none of them are completely free from historical and cultural context, neither through their content nor their author. The closest any textbook comes to New Criticism is seeing the reader as a receiver of the text rather than a co-creator of a text and diminishing the students' experiences as a way of interpreting a text, such as *eXperience* is touching upon. *Passage* and *Targets* also touch upon this part of the theory by their focus on form and content of some of their literary texts. While *Passage* and *eXperience* also have the highest percentages of post-reading tasks based on New Criticism, at the same time *Passage* has the highest percentage of pre-reading tasks based on New Criticism as well. However, none of these textbooks are particularly New Critical, but have definite aspects of it – the reason for this is that the New Critical traditions

are still very strong, and perhaps more so in EFL training as these kinds of textbooks uses literature for more than just experiences, but as examples of authentic language, correct grammar and also for teaching historical and cultural themes. Also, as the students are required to be able to analyze literary texts, there needs to be tasks that will give them opportunities to practice this skill as well. However, if there is no other focus than this when working with literary texts, the use for authentic texts is gone, as fabricated texts would serve the same purpose.

Next, all of the textbooks also have tasks drawing upon reader response theory, and some more on the efferent side of the continuum than others, and some more on the aesthetic side. Those who have many tasks inducing efferent reading may also have more New Critical tasks, and tasks that are more focused on the factual information the students can retrieve from the texts. This shows that the textbook in question may use literary texts as factual texts, through the focus on factual information rather than the experience in the text and that which the students get through reading it. While the students' own prerequisites for interpretation of the literary texts is downplayed by this use of literature, their schemata for English culture and similar aspects are activated instead.

Next, those textbooks that are on the aesthetic part of the reader response continuum will ask more about the students' own backgrounds and feature texts that are interesting due to the topic, such as something they have experienced or that is typical for their age group. In addition, the majority of the tasks may also be intended to be done in pairs, in groups, or even plenary. This is in order to practice oral skills while at the same time discussing the content based on their own prerequisites, and learn how others have interpreted the same text.

6.3 Validity

In chapter 3 I explained the methodology for this study, and commented on this study's validity. As I have only looked at 50% of the available sources and textbooks for this subject at this level, this limits the external validity of the present study. However, as there are some clear similarities between these textbooks, one could imagine the other textbooks to be similar as well, but we cannot know for sure. When it comes to internal validity, the study is more valid as I feel that there is an agreement between the theoretical concepts I have presented and the procedure of which I have analyzed the material. Through the analysis of the tasks, I did

however realize that many of the categories could have been changed slightly in order to better reflect on certain theoretical concepts, many of the categories are two-sided and therefore the overall impression of each textbook may not necessarily be true and could skew the content validity of my study. Nevertheless, through looking at many different elements in the overall treatment of literary texts in these textbooks, it was possible to get a general impression. Also, as there are many similarities between them, this shows that there could be a certain custom design for how textbooks should be designed, with regard to content, layout and other editorial aspects which may be more pedagogical than others. There could also be a certain custom list of literary texts that are appropriate, especially since many of these textbooks had similar texts.

6.4 Summary

In this chapter I have summarized the main findings from this study and discussed them in light of the relevant theory, focusing on each of my areas of focus in my research statement. The answer to my research statement can be found in each of these areas of focus, and as this chapter has shown, there are many similarities between these four textbooks, but also some important differences. It seems that through the design and the large variety of tasks in different categories throughout the textbooks, the use of literature is also varied, but is most often used to illustrate a larger topic which is more fact-based. However, many of the task categories do induce an aesthetic reading, meaning that many tasks will ask for the students' own interpretations and opinions about these texts, not just what factual information they can withdraw from them. These types of tasks are important to promote greater interaction, understanding and respect between people with different cultural backgrounds, through developing both linguistic and cultural competence, which all are objectives in this subject. In the next and final chapter I will conclude my study, as well as discuss some implications and suggestions to further research.

7 Conclusion

Based on my findings in this study and the discussion from the previous chapter, I will revisit my research statement and my areas of focus to give a short summary of the results of these. I will then discuss the implications of these results and also suggestions to further research.

7.1 My research statement and areas of focus

My research statement, as presented in the introduction, was:

How are literary texts and the aspect of literature treated in four textbooks in VG1 English?

Within this research statement I wanted to focus on:

How are literary texts presented in the textbooks?

There were many differences between the four textbooks in this area, especially regarding chapter layout, information about the author and adding background information. Some textbooks would have chapters named after the content of the texts in it, others seemed to do the opposite, and not all textbooks introduced the author ahead of the text, which was an interesting feature.

What kinds of tasks are connected to the literary texts and what do these tasks induce?

The results of the analysis shows that there is a good variety of different theoretical approaches in the different types of tasks, meaning that most of these textbooks use the literary texts as parts of more fact-based chapters, often to illustrate a certain topic, but the tasks show that the texts are also focused on through more reader-centered approaches, such as sharing similar experiences and role playing.

What differences are there in the treatment of literary texts in the four textbooks?

The answer to this area can actually be found in the answers to the other areas of focus as well – the differences between the textbooks are visible in the textbook design elements, in what tasks they have and what texts they have, which have been pointed out in many of the chapters in this thesis. As some textbooks definitely tended towards a certain theoretical approach, none of them were in one approach completely, they all have aspects from all of the

theories I have applied to this study. As I mentioned in the previous chapter, none of the tasks categories are dichotomous, and one cannot expect a textbook to be either.

7.2 Implications and further research

As I have only looked at 50% of the available textbooks and sources out there, it would of course be interesting to look at all of them to see how much they would differ from each other. Also, what seems to be the main differences and what are the reasons for these? How does each publishing house go about creating a textbook like these? One of my initial plans for this thesis was to interview textbook writers and get answers to these exact questions. As the textbooks are supposed to reflect the same curricula, it is interesting that there can be so many differences between them, so what are the criteria for each publishing house when it comes to making these textbooks? As the findings in the present thesis is tentative at times, I would also have liked to go deeper into some of the situations depicted here and see what the actual results would be in a classroom and how students actually work with literary texts. Although many teachers cling to their textbooks, others teach more freely – how is literature taught in these classrooms?

Next, many of these textbooks also focused on analysis of literary texts while others did not seem to have the same focus, which could also reflect on the kinds of exams used in this subject. It could be interesting to see how these exams treat literature; I do not expect exams to be as open to the students' own interpretations as some of these textbooks. Therefore, do these textbooks actually prepare the students for possible exam situations as well? What is the link between the textbooks and the exams?

When it comes to implications, in this case for these four textbooks, I feel that even though there is a good variety of tasks in all of them, the position of literature is a bit unclear – it should have been made clearer what the literary texts' purpose is. Also, if the majority of literary texts are being used for other purposes than teaching literature, one should perhaps refrain from using literary texts for these purposes. Referring to Collie and Slater's reasons for using literature, I feel that even though all those reasons are equally valid reasons for adding literature to English teaching, I do not think that teaching of for example grammar should be done at the expense of literature and what literature, unlike factual texts, can provide the students with on a personal level. Therefore, there should ideally be a large aspect

of reader response theory in the use of literature in the classroom, as this theory works to ensure that the students have good experiences when reading, which as we could see in the different reports presented in chapter 2, is important in order to motivate the students to read. Using comprehension questions uncritically will not necessarily motivate these students, and it may also hinder the students' initial and genuine responses to a text. However, as I have not looked at how the textbooks are being used in the classrooms, I cannot say for sure that literary texts are used in different ways by different teachers as well. In many English classes the class usually reads a novel together as well as the texts in the textbook, and how this novel is treated in each classroom is impossible to say, as it would probably be up to each individual teacher. In this thesis I have used the textbook as being the only medium through which the students learn something, but of course, in reality it is not.

7.3 Summing up

To sum up this thesis, it seems like these four textbooks do a good job in trying to fulfill the curriculum objectives for this subject. In the use of literature in EFL classrooms, there are many benefits for the students: developing their reading and writing skills, their literary competence and cultural competence. In addition, through meeting someone through literature from a different culture with different values and views on life, the students are exposed to the magnitude of the English-speaking world and culture, a culture to which they can compare themselves and thereby strengthen their own values, identity and personality. Learning about others' lives and situations and reflecting on these will also teach these students tolerance and respect, which is an important aspect of any education. As a final point I want to quote children's book author C.S. Lewis (Goodreads 2011), which describes the importance of literature in order to learn something about reality:

Literature adds to reality, it does not simply describe it. It enriches the necessary competencies that daily life requires and provides; and in this respect, it irrigates the deserts that our lives have already become.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: *eXperience* – list of texts

Appendix 2: *Passage* – list of texts

Appendix 3: *Stunt* – list of texts

Appendix 4: *Targets* – list of texts

Appendix 5: “The Road Not Taken” by Robert Frost

Appendix 6: “The Sniper” by Liam O’Flaherty

APPENDIX 1: *eXperience* (Gyldendal, 2006)

NAME OF TEXT	AUTHOR	GENRE	COMMENT
Life Journey	Dan Wilson	Poem	
We're Back!	Sophie Kinsella	Excerpt from novel	
The Ant-Eater	Roald Dahl	Poem	Can also be found in *Targets*
Snow	Julia Alvarez	Excerpt from novel	
They Can Speak English	Yusuf M. Adamu	Poem	
They're Made Out of Meat	Terry Bisson	Short story	
Buddhist Barbie	Denise Duhamel	Poem	
The Snapper	Roddy Doyle	Excerpt from novel	
The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time	Mark Haddon	Excerpt from novel	Can also be found in *Stunt*
A Great Day	Frank Sargeson	Short story	
Dead Men's Path	Chinua Achebe	Short story	
Son of Mine	Oodgeroo	Poem	
How Did I Get Away with Killing one of the Biggest Lawyers n the State? It was Easy	Alice Walker	Short story	
Talking Turkeys	Benjamin Zephania	Poem	
Get a Job	Hal Zirowitz	Poem	
Geometry Lesson	Frank McCourt	Excerpt from novel	
Thou Shalt Not Kill	Channing Pollock	Short story	
Time	Ronald Reagan	Poem	
Word Problem	Bruce Holland Rogers	Short story	
Survivor	Roger McGough	Poem	
Miss Potter's Pyrotechnics	Roger Stevens	Poem	

Love Poem	Lon Otto	Short story	
A Red, Red Rose	Robert Burns	Poem	Can also be found in *Passage*
Heart, We Will Forget Him	Emily Dickinson	Poem	
Warning	Alice Walker	Poem	
My Version	Kil Wright	Poem	
A Christmas Carol	Charles Dickens	Excerpt from novel	
Great Expectations	Charles Dickens	Excerpt from novel	
Her First Ball	Katherine Mansfield	Short story	
The Smile	Ray Bradbury	Short story	
The Road Not Taken	Robert Frost	Poem	Can also be found in *Stunt*

APPENDIX 2: *Passage* (Cappelen Damm, 2009)

NAME OF TEXT	AUTHOR	GENRE	COMMENT
A Day's Wait	Ernest Hemingway	Short story	
The Purist	Ogden Nash	Poem	
Whose Face Do You See?	Melvin Burgess	Short story	
The Kite Runner	Khaled Hosseini	Excerpt from novel	
Everyone Talked Loudly in Chinatown	Anne Jew	Short story	
Winter	William Shakespeare	Poem	
Hijack	R.L.Fish	Short story	
Blackout	Roger Mais	Short story	
Sonny's Lettah	Linton Kwesi Johnson	Poem	
A Red, Red Rose	Robert Burns	Poem	Can also be found in Experience
Tony's Story	Leslie Marmon Silko	Short story	Can also be found in *Targets*
Whale Rider	Witi Ihimaera	Excerpt from novel	
Annabel Lee	Edgar Allan Poe	Literary ballad/poem	
A Dream Deferred	Langston Hughes	Poem	
A Handful of Dates	Tayed Salih	Short story	
The Sniper	Liam O'Flaherty	Short story	Can also be found in *Targets*
The Shining Mountain	Allison Fell	Short story	
Paradise	Matthew Kneale	Short story	

APPENDIX 3: *Stunt* (Samlaget 2009)

NAME OF TEXT	AUTHOR	GENRE	COMMENT
No Man is an Island	John Donne	Poetry	Medium
My Name	Sandra Cisneros	Excerpt from novel	Easy
Empty Seat	Yuan Qiongqiong	Short Story	Medium
The Road Not Taken	Robert Frost	Poetry	Medium, can also be found in *eXperience*
Walden	Henry David Thoreau	Excerpt from Novel	Easy
To The Virgins, To Make Much of Time	Robert Herrick	Poetry	Difficult
How I Learned English	Gregory Djanikian	Poetry	Difficult
Homework	Peter Cameron	Short Story	Medium
The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time	Mark Haddon	Excerpt from novel	Medium, can also be found in *eXperience*
The Romans in Britain	Judith Nicholls	Poetry	Easy
Tartan	George Mackay Brown	Short story	Medium
The Selfish Giant	Oscar Wilde	Short story	Medium
Brick Lane	Monica Ali	Excerpt from novel	Difficult
Slam	Nick Hornby	Excerpt from novel	Medium
The Sonnets (130, 18)	William Shakespeare	Poetry	Difficult
Musée des Beaux Arts	W.H.Auden	Poetry	Difficult
This Englishwoman	Stevie Smith	Poetry	Easy
Dear Female Heart	Stevie Smith	Poetry	Easy
Human Affection	Stevie Smith	Poetry	Easy
Dreams	Langston Hughes	Poetry	Easy
The End of Something	Ernest Hemingway	Short story	Medium
A Short Story In Six Words	Ernest Hemingway	Short story	Easy
Let America be American Again	Langston Hughes	Poetry	Difficult
On The Rainy River	Tim O'Brien	Excerpt from novel	Medium
Because I Could Not Stop for Death	Emily Dickinson	Poetry	Medium

The Earth is your Mother	Leslie Marmon Silko	Poetry	Easy
Adventures of an Indian Princess	Patricia Riley	Short story	Medium
Peder Victorious	Ole E. Rølvaag	Excerpt from novel	Medium
No Speak English	Sandra Cisneros	Short story	Easy
Fish Cheeks	Amy Tan	Excerpt from novel	Easy
Desiree's Baby	Kate Chopin	Short story	Difficult
Grieve Not	Mary Frye	Poetry	Easy
The Ballad of East and West	Rudyard Kipling	Poetry	Easy
I Lost My Talk	Rita Joe	Poetry	Easy
Language Barrier	Valerie Bloom	Poetry	Medium
Mek Four	John Agard	Poetry	Medium
By Any Other Name	Santha Rama Rau	Short story	Difficult
My Country	Zindziwa Mandela	Poetry	Easy
Once Upon a Time	Nadine Gordimer	Short story	Medium
A Prayer from the Living	Ben Okri	Short story	Difficult
No Witchcraft for Sale	Doris Lessing	Short story	Difficult
The Drover's Wife	Henry Lawson	Short story	Difficult
No More Boomerang	Oodgeroo Noonuccal	Poetry	Difficult
Municipal Gum	Oodgeroo Noonuccal	Poetry	Difficult
Rainforest	Judith Wright	Poetry	Medium
Wiwi	Witi Ihimaera	Short story	Medium

APPENDIX 4: *Targets* (Aschehoug, 2009)

NAME OF TEXT	AUTHOR	GENRE	COMMENT
Going Home	Pete Hamill	Short story	
On Passing a Village School	Peter E. Adotey Addo	Poem	
The Way Up to Heaven	Roald Dahl	Short story	
Brackley and the Bed	Samuel Selvon	Short story	
The Toilet	Gcina Mhlope	Short story	
A Soldier's Bride	Chike Emenike	Short story	
One Man's Terrorist	Uniqwe C. Emmanuel	Poem	
The Larder	Morris Lurie	Short story	
Good Advice is Rarer than Rubies	Salman Rushdie	Short story	
A Thousand Splendid Suns	Khaled Hosseini	Excerpt from novel	
The Moose and the Sparrow	Hugh Garner	Short story	
The Sniper	Liam O'Flaherty	Short story	Can also be found in *Passage*
Not Waving but Drowning	Stevie Smith	Poem	
Cinema Poem	Roger McGough	Poem	
We Are Seven	William Wordsworth	Poem	
For Your Best, Son!	Elizabeth George	Excerpt from novel	
Mr Know-All	M. Somerset Maugham	Short story	
Father and Son	Bernard MacLaverty	Short story	
A Poison Tree	William Blake	Poem	
A Meal at Milliways	Douglas Adams	Excerpt from novel	
Hooliganism	Anonymous	Poem	
I'm Nobody	Emily Dickinson	Poem	
Thank You, M'am	Langston Hughes	Short story	
I See You Never	Ray Bradbury	Short story	
The Last Leaf	O. Henry	Short story	

The Cask of Amontillado	Edgar Allan Poe	Short story	
The White Man Drew a Small Circle	Carl Sandburg	Poem	
Tony's Story	Leslie Marmon Silko	Short story	Can also be found in *Passage*
The Custom	Charlie Patsauq	Short story	
How Noisy They Seem	Alootook Ipellie	Poem	
Butterflies	Patricia Grace	Short story	
Forgotten Language	Shel Silverstein	Poem	
Oliver Twist	Charles Dickens	Excerpt from novel	
The Ant-Eater	Roald Dahl	Poem	Can also be found in *eXperience*

APPENDIX 5: "The Road Not Taken"

by Robert Frost (1916)

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

(http://www.bartleby.com/119/1.html)

APPENDIX 6: "The Sniper"

by Liam O'Flaherty (1923)

The long June twilight faded into night. Dublin lay enveloped in darkness but for the dim light of the moon that shone through fleecy clouds, casting a pale light as of approaching dawn over the streets and the dark waters of the Liffey. Around the beleaguered Four Courts the heavy guns roared. Here and there through the city, machine guns and rifles broke the silence of the night, spasmodically, like dogs barking on lone farms. Republicans and Free Staters were waging civil war.

On a rooftop near O'Connell Bridge, a Republican sniper lay watching. Beside him lay his rifle and over his shoulders was slung a pair of field glasses. His face was the face of a student, thin and ascetic, but his eyes had the cold gleam of the fanatic. They were deep and thoughtful, the eyes of a man who is used to looking at death.

He was eating a sandwich hungrily. He had eaten nothing since morning. He had been too excited to eat. He finished the sandwich, and, taking a flask of whiskey from his pocket, he took a short drought. Then he returned the flask to his pocket. He paused for a moment, considering whether he should risk a smoke. It was dangerous. The flash might be seen in the darkness, and there were enemies watching. He decided to take the risk.

Placing a cigarette between his lips, he struck a match, inhaled the smoke hurriedly and put out the light. Almost immediately, a bullet flattened itself against the parapet of the roof. The sniper took another whiff and put out the cigarette. Then he swore softly and crawled away to the left.

Cautiously he raised himself and peered over the parapet. There was a flash and a bullet whizzed over his head. He dropped immediately. He had seen the flash. It came from the opposite side of the street.

He rolled over the roof to a chimney stack in the rear, and slowly drew himself up behind it, until his eyes were level with the top of the parapet. There was nothing to be seen--just the dim outline of the opposite housetop against the blue sky. His enemy was under cover.

Just then an armored car came across the bridge and advanced slowly up the street. It stopped on the opposite side of the street, fifty yards ahead. The sniper could hear the dull panting of the motor. His heart beat faster. It was an enemy car. He wanted to fire, but he knew it was useless. His bullets would never pierce the steel that covered the gray monster.

Then round the corner of a side street came an old woman, her head covered by a tattered shawl. She began to talk to the man in the turret of the car. She was pointing to the roof where the sniper lay. An informer.

The turret opened. A man's head and shoulders appeared, looking toward the sniper. The sniper raised his rifle and fired. The head fell heavily on the turret wall. The woman darted toward the side street. The sniper fired again. The woman whirled round and fell with a shriek into the gutter.

Suddenly from the opposite roof a shot rang out and the sniper dropped his rifle with a curse. The rifle clattered to the roof. The sniper thought the noise would wake the dead. He stooped to pick the rifle up. He couldn't lift it. His forearm was dead. "I'm hit," he muttered.

Dropping flat onto the roof, he crawled back to the parapet. With his left hand he felt the injured right forearm. The blood was oozing through the sleeve of his coat. There was no pain--just a deadened sensation, as if the arm had been cut off.

Quickly he drew his knife from his pocket, opened it on the breastwork of the parapet, and ripped open the sleeve. There was a small hole where the bullet had entered. On the other side there was no hole. The bullet had lodged in the bone. It must have fractured it. He bent the arm below the wound. The arm bent back easily. He ground his teeth to overcome the pain.

Then taking out his field dressing, he ripped open the packet with his knife. He broke the neck of the iodine bottle and let the bitter fluid drip into the wound. A paroxysm of pain swept through him. He placed the cotton wadding over the wound and wrapped the dressing over it. He tied the ends with his teeth.

Then he lay still against the parapet, and, closing his eyes, he made an effort of will to overcome the pain.

In the street beneath all was still. The armored car had retired speedily over the bridge, with the machine gunner's head hanging lifeless over the turret. The woman's corpse lay still in the gutter.

The sniper lay still for a long time nursing his wounded arm and planning escape. Morning must not find him wounded on the roof. The enemy on the opposite roof covered his escape. He must kill that enemy and he could not use his rifle. He had only a revolver to do it. Then he thought of a plan.

Taking off his cap, he placed it over the muzzle of his rifle. Then he pushed the rifle slowly upward over the parapet, until the cap was visible from the opposite side of the street. Almost immediately there was a report, and a bullet pierced the center of the cap. The sniper slanted the rifle forward. The cap clipped down into the street. Then catching the rifle in the middle, the sniper dropped his left hand over the roof and let it hang, lifelessly. After a few moments he let the rifle drop to the street. Then he sank to the roof, dragging his hand with him.

Crawling quickly to his feet, he peered up at the corner of the roof. His ruse had succeeded. The other sniper, seeing the cap and rifle fall, thought that he had killed his man. He was now standing before a row of chimney pots, looking across, with his head clearly silhouetted against the western sky.

The Republican sniper smiled and lifted his revolver above the edge of the parapet. The distance was about fifty yards--a hard shot in the dim light, and his right arm was paining him like a thousand devils. He took a steady aim. His hand trembled with eagerness. Pressing his lips together, he took a deep breath through his nostrils and fired. He was almost deafened with the report and his arm shook with the recoil.

Then when the smoke cleared, he peered across and uttered a cry of joy. His enemy had been hit. He was reeling over the parapet in his death agony. He struggled to keep his feet, but he

was slowly falling forward as if in a dream. The rifle fell from his grasp, hit the parapet, fell over, bounded off the pole of a barber's shop beneath and then clattered on the pavement.

Then the dying man on the roof crumpled up and fell forward. The body turned over and over in space and hit the ground with a dull thud. Then it lay still.

The sniper looked at his enemy falling and he shuddered. The lust of battle died in him. He became bitten by remorse. The sweat stood out in beads on his forehead. Weakened by his wound and the long summer day of fasting and watching on the roof, he revolted from the sight of the shattered mass of his dead enemy. His teeth chattered, he began to gibber to himself, cursing the war, cursing himself, cursing everybody.

He looked at the smoking revolver in his hand, and with an oath he hurled it to the roof at his feet. The revolver went off with a concussion and the bullet whizzed past the sniper's head. He was frightened back to his senses by the shock. His nerves steadied. The cloud of fear scattered from his mind and he laughed.

Taking the whiskey flask from his pocket, he emptied it a drought. He felt reckless under the influence of the spirit. He decided to leave the roof now and look for his company commander, to report. Everywhere around was quiet. There was not much danger in going through the streets. He picked up his revolver and put it in his pocket. Then he crawled down through the skylight to the house underneath.

When the sniper reached the laneway on the street level, he felt a sudden curiosity as to the identity of the enemy sniper whom he had killed. He decided that he was a good shot, whoever he was. He wondered did he know him. Perhaps he had been in his own company before the split in the army. He decided to risk going over to have a look at him. He peered around the corner into O'Connell Street. In the upper part of the street there was heavy firing, but around here all was quiet.

The sniper darted across the street. A machine gun tore up the ground around him with a hail of bullets, but he escaped. He threw himself face downward beside the corpse. The machine gun stopped.

Then the sniper turned over the dead body and looked into his brother's face.

(http://www.classicshorts.com/stories/sniper.html)